

NATO's failure in Libya

Lessons for Africa



by Horace G. Campbell

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Lessons for Africa

Horace Campbell



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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACOTA	African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance programme
ACRI	Africa Crisis Response Initiative
AFRICOM	United States Africa Command
AIG	American International Group
AQIM	al-Qaeda in the Maghreb
AU	African Union
BGS	British Geological Survey
bpd	Barrels per day
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa
CFR	Council on Foreign Relations
CFTC	Commodity Futures Trading Commission
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
EPSA	Exploration and Production Sharing Agreements
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
IASB	International African Service Bureau
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICE	Intercontinental Exchange
ICIG	Istanbul Cooperation Initiative Group
IISS	International Institute of Strategic Studies
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LIA	Libyan Investment Authority
Libor	London Interbank Offered Rate
LIFG	Libyan Islamic Fighting Group
LSE	London School of Economics
MSU	Michigan State University
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSC	National Security Council
NOC	National Oil Company/Corporation
NTC	National Transitional Council
NYMEX	New York Mercantile Exchange
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
Psy-ops	psychological operations
R2P	Responsibility to protect
RECAMP	Reinforcement of African Peacekeeping Capacities programme
RUSI	Royal United Services Institute
TIA	Total Information Awareness
UAE	United Arab Emirates
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Preface

'We must fight to save the Euro'. – Nicholas Sarkozy

'The European experiment is of no use to us ... the area known as North Africa should be Africanised. Either it will become a part of Africa or it will be an anomaly, and will therefore have no future.

'As an inhabitant of North Africa, I have always rejected the Barcelona agreement which regards North Africa as part of the Middle East, with a vocation to integrate with Europe. This is a conspiracy against the integrity of Africa.

'They have said to me the Barcelona agreement and cooperation with the European Union will be to Libya's advantage. They want to draw us in and to make use of us, through the Barcelona agreement, to dismember the African continent, stealing North Africa to make it join with the European Union. This is unacceptable. In any case, look at what has already become of the Barcelona agreement. It is in a comatose condition and could well disappear'. – *Muammar Gaddafi, speech in July 2001 at the opening of the African Union*

'If the Libyan war was about saving lives, it was a catastrophic failure'.

– *Seumas Milne*

Introduction

When the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings erupted in Africa, in the first two months of the year 2011, with the chant, 'the people want to bring down the regime', there was hope all over the continent that these rebellions were part of a wider African Awakening. President Ben Ali of Tunisia was forced to step down and fled to Saudi Arabia. Within a month of Ben Ali's departure, Hosni Mubarak of Egypt was removed from power by the people, who mobilised a massive revolutionary movement in the country. Four days after the ousting of Mubarak, sections of the Libyan people rebelled in Benghazi. Within days, this uprising was militarised, with armed resistance countered by declarations from the Libyan leadership vowing to use raw state power to root out the rebellion.

The first Libyan demonstrations occurred on February 15, 2011, but by February 21 there were reports that innocent civilians were in imminent danger of being massacred by the army. This information was embellished by reports of the political leadership branding the rebellious forces as 'rats'. The United States (US), Britain and France took the lead to rush through a resolution in the United Nations (UN) Security Council, invoking the principle of the 'responsibility to protect'. This concept of responsibility to protect had been embraced and supported by many governments in the aftermath of the genocidal episodes in Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo. The UN Security Council Resolution 1973 of 2011 was loosely worded, with the formulation 'all necessary measures' tacked on to ensure wide latitude for those societies and political leaders who orchestrated the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) intervention in Libya.¹ In the following nine months, the implementation of this UN resolution exposed the real objectives of the leaders of the US, France and Britain. With the Western media fuelling a propaganda campaign in the traditions of 'manufacturing consent', this Security Council authorisation was stretched from a clear and limited civilian protection mandate into a military campaign for regime change and the execution of the President of Libya, Muammar Gaddafi.²

When, a week after Gaddafi's execution, Seumas Milne wrote in the UK newspaper *The Guardian*, 'If the Libyan war was about saving lives, it was a catastrophic failure', he was communicating a conclusion that had been echoed by democratic forces all over the world, and repeated by concerned

intellectuals who had written *An Open Letter to the Peoples of Africa and the World from Concerned Africans*.³ The themes of NATO's failure were repeated by Western newspapers that opined, 'The Libya campaign, far from demonstrating NATO's abiding strength, rather exposed its manifold, and growing, weaknesses'.⁴ Think tanks and opinion makers such as the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) of London and the Jamestown Foundation of the US could not but comment on the clear failure of this highly publicised mission that was presented under the rubric of 'humanitarianism'. As a display of Western military strength and cohesion, the NATO operation was a failure and was understood to be so by the majority outside the orbit of the mainstream of the Anglo-American media.⁵ Writers from Asia were linking the role of the United States Africa Command (AFRICOM) to the new power grab in Africa, while there was massive opposition from Africa. In studying the catastrophic failures, African intellectuals have sought to highlight the illegal actions of NATO, calling for the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate and establish if war crimes were committed in Libya.

One year after the NATO forces embarked on their mission to carry out regime change in Libya, it is still pertinent to restate the principal ideas that came from Africa in the face of the present lawlessness, torture and terror campaigns of competing militias. Amnesty International, by no means an organisation unfriendly to NATO, issued a report in February 2012 detailing widespread torture in the prisons and makeshift detention facilities in Libya. This report documented savage practices which included beatings with whips, cables, metal chains and wooden sticks, electric shocks, extraction of fingernails, and rape. Militia fighters conducted these attacks brazenly, in some cases abusing prisoners in the presence of human rights advocates.⁶ Amnesty International has also reported the widespread persecution of innocent citizens by out-of-control militias. In January 2012, one report by a human rights group from the Middle East documented war crimes carried out by NATO in their eight-month operation for regime change.⁷ No less a person than Navi Pillay, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, noted that 'the lack of oversight by the central authority creates an environment conducive to torture and ill-treatment'.

The more chilling aspect of this persecution is the racist attacks on those who are supposed to be 'black' Africans. There are reports from numerous sources that, in addition to black Africans being detained *en masse* on the suspicion that they were mercenaries for Gaddafi, the town of Tawergha, previously a black African community, has been completely emptied and

declared a 'closed military zone' by the NATO-supported militia forces. Revenge and retribution is now being followed by separatist movements calling for either the dissolution of the present state or the establishment of a federal authority.

This reality of continued warfare and widespread torture of Africans demands a revisit of the position of the African Union (AU) which was articulated on March 10, 2011, in the 265th meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the AU. This 'roadmap' was a five-point plan demanding: a ceasefire; the protection of civilians; the provision of humanitarian aid for Libyans and foreign workers in the country; dialogue between the two sides, i.e. the Gaddafi regime and the National Transitional Council (NTC); leading to an 'inclusive transitional period' and political reforms which 'meet the aspirations of the Libyan people.'

The scramble for African and Libyan resources

One year after the UN resolution authorising the use of force to implement the no-fly zone, the deployment of NATO military forces – coordinating with 'special forces' made Qatar – under the umbrella of the unlimited bombing campaigns has made the international headlines. However, the reality of the destruction in Libya has not made the consciousness of Africans and those who support peace internationally.⁸ In the open letter to the citizens of the world, the concerned African intellectuals expressed their pain and anger at the manipulation of the UN by the ruling elements in France, Great Britain and the US.⁹ Drawing attention to the lessons from the wars against the people of Iraq and the statement by sections of the neo-conservative forces in the US wishing for the 'death of the UN', these intellectuals clarified the manipulation of information that preceded the passing of the UN resolution 1973 of March 2011.

This attack on Africans in the midst of a depression is not new, and reminded African intellectuals of the context of the demise of the League of Nations. African scholars wanting to inspire a new appreciation of global history readily understand that it was during a capitalist depression that the League of Nations collapsed, after the European powers failed to intervene to halt the Italian invasion of Abyssinia, in October 1935.¹⁰ This failure of the League of Nations laid the foundations for the triggers of war that engulfed humanity in the tragic cycles of economic crises, fascism, war, genocide and the dropping of an atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. In 2011, in the midst of another depression, international diplomacy had

failed in Africa and African intellectuals, like their predecessors of the International African Service Bureau (IASB) of the depression years, were warning of the cascading forces for more war.¹¹ These African intellectuals reminded those who would listen that the UN Security Council had failed to prove that its authorisation of the use of force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter was a proportionate and appropriate response to what had, in reality, developed into a civil war in Libya. They maintained,

It is clear that the US and its European allies are reverting to crude military means to re-colonise Africa. The independence that Africans fought so hard for must be defended. We cannot allow the second scramble for Africa to occur on our watch. We condemn the US, UK and France for the flagrant abuse of the UN Security Council and demand that the International Criminal Court investigate NATO to establish if war crimes were committed in Libya. We condemn the extra judicial killing of Col. Gaddafi and call for an independent transparent international enquiry to establish the true facts surrounding it.

This monograph is written in the spirit of those forces internationally who are opposed to the present scramble for Africa and who are campaigning against the remilitarisation of Africa. In the process of this analysis, we will elaborate on the insensate struggle among the Western powers for control over the petroleum resources.

African petroleum resources are caught up in a new transitional period, where the future of the top Western oil corporations is on the line. Even before the complete fall of Gaddafi's regime, one British scholar, David Anderson, had opined on 'the Fight for Libya's Oil'.¹² Waxing on the 'significant pickings' in Libya, Anderson reflected on the opportunities for Europe's oil giants – Eni, Total, BP and Repsol YPF – who are 'perfectly positioned' to take advantage of these commercial opportunities. What was left out was the deep competition between European oil 'giants' and the 'big oil' firms from North America. In 2002, the African Oil Policy Initiative Group conducted a symposium entitled 'African Oil: A Priority for U.S. National Security and African Development'. It was in this setting that former Congressman William Jefferson said, 'African oil should be treated as a priority for U.S. national security post 9-11. I think that ... post 9-11 it's occurred to all of us that our traditional sources of oil are not as secure as we thought they were'. Jefferson was reflecting one sector of the US policy environment that fell under the sway of the alliance between big oil and big banks. The US oil companies emerged as major international

corporations after 1945 and influenced the US government initiatives wielding profound influence over the Pentagon, the State Department, the Department of Energy, the Department of the Interior and other branches of the US imperial system. In the era of financialisation, these corporations became enmeshed in the Wall Street investment game and increased their influence over US state at home and abroad. The relationship between the big oil companies, the US state system and the Wall Street oligarchs is described as the tripartite alliance in the US political system.

After developing the tripartite alliance with the top Wall Street investment firms and riding on high oil and gasoline prices, the US oil 'giants' became the most profitable industry in the world. Six of the ten largest corporations in the world are oil companies. They are, in order, ExxonMobil, Royal Dutch Shell (Shell), British Petroleum (BP), Chevron, ConocoPhillips, and Total. These large corporations are at the core of what is called 'Big Oil.' According to the author of a book on *The Tyranny of Oil*, Big Oil is experiencing a level of power that has only one historical precedent: that of the Standard Oil era. And, like Standard Oil, the companies appear willing to do anything to maintain their position.¹³

In our examination of the relationship between Goldman Sachs and the Libyan National Oil Company, we will draw attention to the challenge that Libyan independence posed to both petrol imperialism and the dominance of NATO over the region of North Africa and the Mediterranean Sea. The oil companies never forgot that the example of Libya's nationalisation of oil in the 1970s was the precursor to Iranian nationalisation in 1979 and Saudi Arabia's full take-over of Aramco in the mid 1980s.¹⁴ Before the uprisings, the Libyan leader had again raised the question of nationalising Western oil companies.

Numerous scholars have been explicit that Libya was enmeshed in the new geopolitics for energy resources.¹⁵ These scholars can be distinguished from the spokespersons for Western corporations who write from Universities and organs such as the Atlantic Council or the Council on Foreign Relations in the US. It is the very platform for the ideas of the 'liberalisation' and 'freedom' that further exposes the worn out intellectual apparatus of the West in the service of the tripartite alliance. Yet, as we will analyse in this monograph, the intelligentsia in the service of finance capital are in a losing battle at the intellectual level and on the ground in the actual competition to control the resources of Africa. After failing to compete in the 'marketplace' with new rising powers, the military management of the international system is coming up against national

oil corporations that are seeking new linkages with Brazil, China, India and other emerging forces in the international system. Throughout the decade after international sanctions were lifted against Libya, the Gaddafi government skilfully used exploration and production sharing agreements (EPSA) with the Libyan National Oil Corporation to maintain a balance in its relationships between North American, European, Brazilian, Chinese, Russian, Turkish, Indian and other corporate entities that were investing in Libyan energy markets. By the year 2009, the Chinese oil giant PetroChina Co. overtook Exxon Mobil as the world's most valuable company. Though Exxon temporarily regained its position, the rapid growth of PetroChina, Sinopec and the Brazilian state-owned company Petrobras challenged the dominance of Big Oil and changed the international energy landscape. Libya was able to reflect on alternative sources of financing for its resources. By the end of 2010, China was the top investor in Libya.

The state-controlled Libyan Investment Authority (LIA) entered into the opaque world of financing energy markets before their corporate associates on Wall Street considered that the 'neo-liberal' faction of the political leadership in Libya were too weak to deliver the economy and the Libyan reserves to the Western financial oligarchs. Gaddafi had kept the Western oligarchs at bay using a revolving door mechanism. Moreover, the US oil majors found Gaddafi's flirtation with non-European companies in Libya too threatening. Libya is a top producer of petroleum products, with less than 30 per cent of its resources tapped. The leadership of this same Libya had become aggressive in its financial operations, while committing itself to the establishment of an African Monetary Union, an African Central Bank and an African Investment Bank. After December 2010, the Central Bank of Libya took the controlling position in the Bahrain-based Arab Banking Corporation, which was owned by the Kuwait Investment Authority, the Central Bank of Libya, the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and other smaller shareholders. (To date, very few scholarly writings have linked the Libyan dominance in the Arab Banking Corporation to the tectonic events in Libya since February 2011.) Many of the political leaders in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) – whose calling, since the 1970s, had been to recycle the resources of Arabia for the Western financial system – had been alarmed by the independence of the Libyan leadership in its thrust to move the Arab Banking Group out of its servile position to Western banking interests.

Taking Libya out of Africa

In this monograph, the author will seek to bring to light the interconnections between the resources of Libya, the NATO intervention and the discrediting of the liberal discourses on African resources, including the discourses on human rights and the responsibility to protect. It is our intention to draw out the intensity of the Western preoccupation with Libya and the leading roles of Western intellectuals. In the Africanist establishment in the West, there are established experts on every African society. In the case of Libya, however, there were not only the country experts but also the intellectuals in the think tanks – such as Chester Crocker (through the Atlantic Council), Joseph Nye, Michael Porter, Francis Fukuyama, Richard Perle, Bernard Lewis, Benjamin Barber and Robert Putman (through the Monitor Group) – in their sustained campaign to promote ‘reforms’ in Libya and Africa.¹⁶

Saif al-Islam, one of Gaddafi’s sons, had been schooled in the ideas of neo-liberal discourse about ‘reforms’ and had successfully ensnared leading Western intellectuals in a project to burnish the image of the Gaddafi government. The Monitor Group, a Boston-based, top consulting firm associated with the Harvard Business School, was seeking to catch up with the advance work of the London School of Economics (LSE), other British institutions of higher learning, politicians and sectors of the energy industry. Anthony Giddens, one of the most-cited sociologists of the Anglo-Saxon intellectual world and former Director of the LSE, made many trips to Libya and brought in Tony Blair, the former Prime Minister, as an interlocutor to promote British interests in Libya ‘from strength to strength’.

Joseph Nye has demonstrated, in theory and practice, that the international relations ideas about the soft power of the United States are part of the general ‘what is good for US banks and corporations is good for humanity’ toolbox. Institutions such as the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) provide the necessary intellectual and policy network between the banks, the oil companies and the barons of finance. However, the Libyan episode exposed the reality that the belief systems of ‘free markets’ and ‘soft power’ are tools of the neo-liberal thrust of permanent war and the Americanisation of the world. Richard Haass, president of the CFR gave up the ‘soft power’ façade and explicitly called for US ‘boots on the ground’. These realists of the US foreign policy establishment poured invective against Libya by terming the people ‘tribalists’. Anthropologists and other social scientists who are integrated into this ideation system were then placed as frontline thinkers and writers for the military information

operations against Africa. It then fell to the journals and information outlets of Western domination to saturate the spaces of information with 'experts', to deny the possibility for citizens to understand Libyan society.

Concerned scholars internationally who seek to understand the politics and culture of Libya from European language sources will find that US and British intellectuals have sought to develop a monopoly on the interpretation of the political processes in Libya since the Gaddafi government came to power, in September 1969. Country studies by research institutions were supplemented by books on *Oil and State Building*, with French and Italian intellectuals making their own contribution to a body of literature that took Libya out of Africa and reproduced ideas on the nature of tribal society in Libya.¹⁷

Tribal Libya, rogue state, terrorist state, radical Islamist and other prerogative social science categories obscured the achievements of this society and reproduced the divisions between Libya and Africa. A clear understanding of the historical processes of domination and resistance in Libya will highlight the regional differences between the areas formerly known as Cyrenaica, Tripolitania and Fezzan. That these areas were not united under one political authority until 1951 is an important component of the nature of Libyan society. This regional differentiation does not take these peoples out of Africa – and it is important to re-state that Libya is an African society with peoples who have an Arab identity. In the dominant Western literature, the Sahara is presented as a dividing line between North Africa and Sub-Saharan Africa, instead of an area for the exchange of ideas, peoples and goods.¹⁸ It is this tradition of division that renders the revolutionary changes in North Africa as part of an 'Arab Spring'.¹⁹ African scholars have instead drawn attention to the influence of the African revolutionary processes since the Algerian revolution and the confluence of Pan Africanism and Pan Arabism in North Africa.

Scholars such as Samir Amin have been able to analyse the historical foundations of the unity and diversity across this region while penetrating nationalism and the relationship to the pre-capitalist formations in the Middle East and North Africa.²⁰ A great deal of trouble has been taken to identify the uprisings in North Africa as an 'Arab Spring', and this has been as conscious as the historic efforts to take Egypt out of Africa. The history of the Arabised Berbers in Libya is pertinent to the African relations with the region, and is linked to the Pan African Project of the Jamahiriya.

An elaboration of the argument on the Pan African linkages of the peoples of North Africa would carry us deeper into the past, which is

outside the scope of this present analysis of the failures of NATO in an era of economic crisis. Some scholars and liberal analysts have underplayed the depth of this capitalist depression, but Simon Johnson, former Chief Economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), has written of the 'Quiet Coup' of the bankers in this depression. Paul Krugman wrote a book entitled *End this Depression Now*, but in this book he failed to link the depression to the increased militarisation in parts of the Middle East and Africa.²¹ Dispossession and expropriation of the resources of oppressed societies are now clear manifestations of the scramble for Africa in this moment of economic crisis.

Johnson, who wrote about the 'Quiet Coup' in relation to the political power of the bankers and financiers in the US, observed later in his book, *13 Bankers: The Wall Street Takeover and the Next Financial Meltdown*, that the financial oligarchs cannot halt the rush to a new financial meltdown. The question is whether societies all over the world, especially Africa, are ready for alternatives when this meltdown takes place. According to Johnson, 'What we face now could, in fact, be worse than the Great Depression – because the world is now so much more interconnected and because the banking sector is now so big'.²² Samir Amin went further than describing the effects of this capitalist crisis by drawing attention to the polarisation and deepening inequalities. In the book *Ending the Crisis of Capitalism or Ending Capitalism?*, Amin argued that 'the global economic crisis has once again made people question the limitations of neoliberal globalisation and, more generally, the limitations of capitalism'.

These limitations were becoming apparent every day since 2008, when Lehman Brothers collapsed. In the years after that fateful event, the real limits have been revealed in Western Europe, where the top European capitalist countries have undergone their deepest crisis since the 1930s. The long-term survival of the Euro and the European Union is now in question. The big difference between the crisis today and that of the 1930s is that, in the period of independence, European powers could no longer use extra economic coercion such as Plant More Crops or other forms of coerced labour in Africa.²³

It is against this reality of the NATO intervention in Libya that one can dissect the statement by Nicholas Sarkozy,

We will fight to save the Euro.

Was the Libyan intervention one component of this fight?

The changes in the international political economy had been so rapid that the Libyan intervention exposed the deep divisions within Europe and highlighted how sections of French, British and US capital were resorting to brute force to remain competitive. The energetic participation of Qatar as core partner of NATO (through the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, a NATO ally) clarified the ways in which proxy states are brought in as military partners in the new re-division of the world. One of the questions that will be posed in the conclusion is whether these new relations, as manifest in the relations between the Istanbul Cooperation and the Mediterranean Dialogue initiatives, are sustainable in the medium term. Intellectually, the failures in Libya exposed the disinformation and military information operations of the West. Hugh Roberts captured this reality in his essay *Who Said Gaddafi Had to Go?*:

*The intervention tarnished every one of the principles the war party invoked to justify it. It occasioned the deaths of thousands of civilians, debased the idea of democracy, debased the idea of law and passed off a counterfeit revolution as the real thing. Two assertions that were endlessly reiterated – they were fundamental to the Western powers' case for war – were that Gaddafi was engaged in 'killing his own people' and that he had 'lost all legitimacy', the latter presented as the corollary of the former. Both assertions involved mystifications.*²⁴

Roberts maintained that a sober understanding of the Libyan intervention will only come to light by future work on those who manipulated the information. African intellectuals and policy makers have learnt many lessons of the manipulation of humanitarianism. The duplicity of Western leaders was an eye opener, and even allies of the US such as Yoweri Museveni have written on the Libyan experience. His article entitled *The Qaddafi I Know* clearly stated that, while the Libyan leader was no saint, the West was wrong to intervene in African affairs.²⁵ In this short essay one could discern a 'soul searching' of what does it mean to be an ally of the US. For leaders such as Museveni, who had invested his own future with the US military, the Libyan intervention was an eye opener because Libya's leaders had worked overtime to rehabilitate themselves in the eyes of the US and Britain – especially after the invasion of Iraq and the capture of Saddam Hussein.

The NATO operation exposed the reality that, in the current depression, there will be massive use of force by Western corporations to remain competitive. These corporate entities have decided to go beyond the

structural adjustment ‘reforms’ and take a military stand in Africa. There were also commentators who perceived the Libyan intervention as a proxy war with China.²⁶ War and revolution in North Africa opened a new period in the history of Africa.

In the book *African Awakening: The Emerging Revolutions*, Samir Amin has argued that the uprisings in Africa and the Middle East represent one sign of the new ‘storm zone’ of repeated revolts in the countries of the South.²⁷ This monograph will contend that the US Africa Command and the objective of the conservative US forces are to pre-empt other revolutionary uprisings of the type and scale that removed the regimes in Tunisia and Egypt. This goal of the US security establishment was explicitly outlined by the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C., when it organised to reflect on the implications of the uprising in Egypt.²⁸ Whether the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia serve as one sign of the ‘storm zone’ is a major concern for the Western oil companies, and despite its limitations, the African Union has understood that the war in Libya was an attack on Africans.

In this monograph, we will agree that the NATO intervention has served to speed up the awareness in Africa that the AU must be strengthened to be able to organise the political, diplomatic and military requirements to resist external military missions such as that of NATO in Libya. We will also link this catastrophic failure to the failed ideas of Joseph Nye, Anthony Giddens, Lisa Anderson and the international experts whose intellectual trajectory was to dismiss the project of African independence and African Unity. What was striking about the advocates of liberal interventions was their silence when African migrant workers in Libya were being butchered by elements from the NTC.

The monograph will outline the disinformation that was unleashed to cover up the execution of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi and restate the argument that the manner of the killing and the destruction of Sirte were aimed at the destruction of the ideas of African Unity. One does not have to agree with all of the ideas of Colonel Gaddafi but there is one core idea – that of African freedom – that must be highlighted. From the work of Kwame Nkrumah to the stewardship of Nelson Mandela, there has been one overriding principle: that Africans must dictate the pace and rate of the unification and freedom of Africa. If, according to sections of the US intellectual establishment, the US war against the people of Vietnam reflected a ‘congenital moral failure of the American political system’,²⁹ this Libyan intervention and murder of Gaddafi will go down in history as

a colossal failure of NATO and one which spurred the pace of the unity of Africa.

The Independence of Libya and the Birth of NATO

The history of Libya has, for thousands of years, been intertwined with the social and economic transformations of Africa, Europe and the Middle East. Sitting at the North of the continent of Africa, the peoples of the region west of the Nile Valley were engulfed in the fortunes of trade, ideas and religious expansion. Europeans along the Mediterranean coast interacted with the peoples of Libya for thousands of years, suffering major invasions from this region. Two of the more well-known forays from North Africa were the one by Hannibal and another by the Moors, who occupied the Iberian Peninsula as part of the wave of new expansions after the 7th Century. This invasion emanated from Arabia, through Egypt to Morocco, and Arabised millions of Africans from the Imazighen peoples – called Berbers.³⁰ European scholars imposed their own concepts of hierarchy on the diverse populations of differing ethnicities that lived in the area that is now called Libya.³¹

The peoples who inhabit this territory were under the domination of the Ottoman Empire up to the period of the expansion of industrial Europe when it reached the monopoly stage. Present day Libya emerged out of two provinces of the Ottoman Empire – Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. The third region, called Fezzan, eluded complete occupation by the colonial powers. These provinces escaped the French occupation of Algiers in 1830 and the financial domination of France over the area of what was to become Tunisia. After the banking group, the Rothschilds, helped Britain to consolidate their ascendancy in Egypt subsequent to the building of the Suez Canal, in 1869, there was an unwritten Anglo-French convention that defined the British and Turkish spheres of influence in North Africa.

The liberation struggle

Like most present boundaries in Africa, Libya's current borders were carved out in the period of the imperial partitioning of Africa by European states, when Africans lost their independence. At the infamous Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, the region that is now Libya remained under Ottoman rule.

Turkey was allowed to maintain nominal control over this region because the dominant imperial powers did not consider Turkish power as a threat to monopoly interests in Europe.

Italy, which had recently been quasi united, wanted to establish itself as a major world power in Africa but was soundly defeated by the Ethiopians at Dogali in 1887, and more decisively at Adowa in 1896. The Italians never gave up their goal of gaining colonial territory in Africa, and in 1911 invaded the area that is now called Libya. 'By turning Cyrenaica into an armed camp, by arrests, deportations, confiscations and executions and by use of an overwhelming weight of modern military equipment, the Italian finally mastered the resistance and cornered the last, exhausted fighting bands of the Gebel Akhdar'.³²

In all African societies the people instinctively rose up to oppose foreign occupation, and Libya was no exception. Libyan peoples of differing ethnic groups united to oppose Italian occupation and a consciousness about being Libyan emerged in this anti-colonial period between 1911 and 1941. There was constant guerrilla resistance against the Italians, especially after the Benito Mussolini forces acceded power in 1922 and imposed fascist administrative structures in Libya. In order to snuff out rebellion, the fascists imported large numbers of Italian settlers and developed infrastructure to coordinate colonial control. Peoples from all regions rebelled against colonial fascism, with outstanding Libyans like Umar a Mukhtar waging guerrilla war against the Italians for more than twenty years. Like the coordinated hunt for Gaddafi, close to 80 years later, Mukhtar was hunted down, captured and hanged in one of the fascist concentration camps.

World War II speeded up the processes of national consciousness and political organisation among the Libyans who had been integrated into the generalised forms of anti-colonialism that was then sweeping North Africa. Britain took control of the region after the Axis forces were driven from North Africa. With their monarchical traditions, the British supported one faction of the Libyans, the Sanussis, and installed their leader as King Idris. British intellectuals such as E.E. Evans-Pritchard functioned as colonial administrators, and through their anthropological writings sought to place the cultural modelling and categorisations of 'primitive tribal' affiliations on Libya as on other African societies.³³

The tide of nationalism had surged throughout the region in the decades between world wars. As fascist forces advanced across North Africa toward Egypt, many nationalists organised to break imperial domination of the

region. The British doubled down to place puppet regimes across this area that was then, as now, considered geo-strategically important for Europe. The British military controlled the society as a military zone, but the British plan for the rejuvenation of the British empire after World War II came up against the realities of the changed international situations. Following the formation of the UN, in 1945, the peoples of Libya were placed under UN Trusteeship, with Britain maintaining de facto political control, and over the period 1941-1951 the provinces of Cyrenaica, Tripolitania and Fazzan were united to become one kingdom. The independence of the United Kingdom of Libya was proclaimed on December 24, 1951 – two years after the formation of a new military alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

The strategic importance of Libya during the Second World War and the memory of the 1941 siege of Tobruk (a seaport city and peninsula on Libya's eastern coast, near the border with Egypt) were too fresh in the minds of the British for their military planners to give up their control entirely, and the British decided to formalise their military presence in the country. The Libyan monarch signed a twenty-year treaty of friendship and alliance with Britain which included a clause for Britain to maintain military bases in Libya.

As the number one ally of Britain, the US military was able to secure military basing rights and signed an agreement with the Libyan king in 1954. Wheelus Air Base, a US Air Force base established in Libya, became known as 'Little America' until the US was asked to leave after Colonel Gaddafi seized power, on September 1, 1969. The US has been scheming for a way back into Libya ever since.

NATO's origins

When the North Atlantic Treaty was signed, on 4 April 1949, most of the founding members were colonial overlords (Belgium, Britain, France, the Netherlands, Italy and the US).³⁴ The organisation was dominated by the US and constituted a system of 'collective defence' whereby its member states agreed to mutual defence in response to an attack by any external party. The external party in question at that time was the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), in so far as NATO had been formed as an alliance ostensibly to defend Western Europe against the Soviet Union.

Charles de Gaulle pulled France out of the alliance in 1966, after it became clear that this military association was dominated by the US and Britain (supporting their military industries). US military industries had placed a lock on the market for military technology within NATO

by implementing language in the treaty about the 'standardisation of allied military technology'. In this case, the language meant that US transnationals producing military equipment dominated NATO.

The Collapse of the Soviet Union and Emergence of a Global NATO

Historically, when an alliance is formed for a specific purpose – in this case, halting the spread of communism – that alliance is folded when the mission is complete. Hence, after the fall of the Soviet Union, in 1991, it was the expectation of those who considered this period as one of a ‘peace dividend’ that the mission of NATO would be scaled down. Instead, NATO expanded, adding new members seven times, and now comprising 28 nations. Joining the original signatories were Greece and Turkey (1952); West Germany (1955; from 1990 as Germany); Spain (1982); the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland (1999); Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia (2004); and Albania and Croatia (2009). Most of the new members after 1991 were former members of the Warsaw Pact nations, with President George W. Bush pushing for NATO to expand further east to include Georgia and Ukraine. The same George W. Bush mobilised NATO to fight wars in Afghanistan as Operation Enduring Freedom and in Iraq as Operation Iraqi Freedom, where member states of NATO worked as a ‘coalition of the willing’.³⁵

Protecting finance capital

Russia opposed the expansion of NATO, claiming that this was a military alliance to encircle Russia by extending its membership to include former members of the Warsaw Pact.³⁶ Even within the foreign policy establishment there were foreign service officers who believed that the expansion was a policy error of historic importance.³⁷ What these officers did not grasp, however, was that in the post-cold war era the defence of the tripartite alliance at the apex of the US economy required a transnational military force capable of intervening in any part of the world to protect ‘investments’ and ‘free markets’. Deregulation is a concept that flowed from this post-cold war world, one that girded the neo-liberal push and purported that the least regulated market is the benchmark for a highly democratic society.

NATO expanded under President Clinton to protect a 'globalised' capital, and it was in this period of expansion that NATO jumped from twelve members to sixteen, then to nineteen, then to 26 by 2004 and to 28 members by 2009. Despite vocal opposition from Russia, the discussion of expanding NATO now proceeded to develop the idea of Global NATO.³⁸ The leaders of NATO slowly built up relations with Australia in the Pacific, and in the Middle East established the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative Group (ICIG). This brought in the six members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) – Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) – as allies of the US after the start of the war against the people of Iraq.³⁹ This military agreement of 2004 cemented the links to the countries of this region, strengthening the 1994 agreement that had been termed the Mediterranean Dialogue initiative.⁴⁰ The initiative involved seven non-NATO countries of the Mediterranean region: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia. According to NATO itself, the Mediterranean Dialogue is based upon the twin pillars of political dialogue and practical cooperation. Vijay Prashad termed the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council 'the Arab NATO'.⁴¹

Africa remained outside the orbit of this globalised NATO because the memories of the anti-apartheid struggles had been too fresh in Africa, especially Southern Africa. Soon after the end of apartheid, the government of the US proposed an African Crisis Response Initiative. Nelson Mandela was among the first to vigorously oppose this planned military force in Africa. For the next eight years, US diplomatic efforts were geared towards ensnaring individual states into a military network dominated by the US. Hiding behind the guise of humanitarian relief, in 2004 the US announced the formation of the African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program. The ostensive purpose of ACOTA was to train military trainers and equip African national militaries to conduct peace support operations. Less than four years later, the US launched a new initiative, the US Africa Command (AFRICOM). This new military force for Africa was rejected by even the most servile allies of the US. There was only one society that, in public, promised basing privileges for AFRICOM. This was Liberia. The sentiment at the popular level in Africa restrained the political leaders from publicly entering the kind of 'political dialogue and practical cooperation' that had ensnared the leaders of North Africa in the Mediterranean Dialogue.

Global NATO evolved as an umbrella for the protection of Wall Street and the international economic system dominated by the oligarchy in the

US. Richard Holbrooke was the perfect symbol of this political dialogue and practical cooperation which strengthened the relationship between militarism and Wall Street. Holbrooke had been pivotal in the networks that were weaved between members of the foreign policy establishment and financial elite in the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR). Though the centrality of the CFR was partially dethroned by the Heritage Foundation and the very conservative think tanks after the rise of Ronald Reagan, Wall Street barons such as Maurice Greenberg, of American International Group (AIG), worked hard to become accepted into this establishment of the Northeast.⁴² In the years 1981-1993, Holbrooke advised Lehman Brothers, before he was drafted by the Clinton Administration to be a top diplomat in Europe, negotiating the issues of the Balkan wars and an expanded NATO. After the defeat of the Clinton team in 2001, Holbrooke became the vice chairman of Perseus LLC, a leading private equity firm. Between February 2001 and July 2008, he was a key figure of the foreign policy establishment on the CFR and a member of the Board of Directors of AIG. AIG was at the centre of the innovative financial projects that emerged from the era of mortgage backed securities and credit default swaps.⁴³ This was a company in the midst of the insurance of new financial products.

The new enlarged NATO coincided with the expansion of the neo-liberal operations of Wall Street and the new forms of finance capital that engulfed the world up to the time of the financial crisis of 2008. Throughout the 1980s AIG had supported the productions of books and articles on the merits of deregulation and the importance of the global services economy.⁴⁴ The concentration and centralisation of capital had given rise to the new political power of bankers, financial institutions and oil companies, who did not respect borders. Global NATO corresponded to the explosion of the new business model of Big Oil and Wall Street. This model was one where, according to Simon Johnson, a former Chief Economist of the IMF,

*business as usual now means inventing tradable, high-margin products using their market power to capture fees based on trading volume, taking advantage of their privileged position to place bets on their proprietary trading accounts, and borrowing as much money as possible (in part by engineering their way around capital requirements) to maximize their profits.*⁴⁵

This business is of interest to us for, as we will show later, the Libyan Investment Authority was ensnared into this opaque world that was informed by the belief in the inviolability of the free market. This narrative

of 'markets' concealed the real nature of power in 'democratic societies' and provided the conditions for sub-prime lending, mortgage-backed securities, collateralised debt obligations (CDOs) and credit default swaps. Thus, when NATO spokespersons argued that NATO was comprised of democratic states (involving 'a concert of democracies'), it is possible to decode this discourse and grasp the real meaning that these are countries where the political power of finance capital is manifest with the mantra of the 'efficient market hypothesis.' This doctrine was promoted by Stanley Fischer, of the IMF, who argued that

*free capital movements facilitate a more efficient global allocation of savings, and help channel resources into their most productive uses, thus increasing economic growth and welfare, providing benefits that would outweigh the risks.*⁴⁶

The efficient market hypothesis had been promoted vigorously in Africa, where many economists accepted the mantra that developing countries should abandon restrictions on the flow of capital and open their economy to foreign money. Those states that did not adhere felt the full weight of the political and military power of the international financial oligarchy. The political power of the IMF to undermine the sovereignty of African societies has been documented extensively, and scholars are now concentrating on how the IMF facilitated capital flight from Africa.⁴⁷

In his book *The Liberal Virus: Permanent War and the Americanization of the World*, Samir Amin studied the relationship between militarism and neo-liberalism and was able to penetrate this discourse of 'free markets' and grasp its practical implications for international politics. From books by Samir Amin, Yash Tandon and others it has been possible to understand the relationship between the military management of the international system and the increased role of NATO. It has also been possible to grasp the unleashing of propaganda warfare against the citizens of the world, to launch missions such as the war in Kosovo in 1999. Humanitarianism became the cover for the new military management of the international system, as human rights was used as a pretext to sell war.⁴⁸ Africans could see through this duplicity of the humanitarian imperialism of NATO in the concrete conditions of the genocide in Rwanda and the NATO operations in the Balkans. In 1994, the US took the lead to oppose the United Nations intervention to stop the genocide in Rwanda. In 1999, NATO bombed Kosovo for over 79 days as it gave itself a new mission to expand US military power right up to Moscow's doorstep.

NATO spreads its reach

Gingerly, after Charles de Gaulle had left NATO in 1966, Nicolas Sarkozy rejoined in 2009. The dollar dominance as reserve currency had been a source of contention internationally, after the US devalued the dollar in 1971 and undermined the principles of the 1944 Bretton Woods agreement. France had been working within Europe to challenge the dollar and the US government on the world scale.

After World War I, Britain and France took the lead in dividing up the territories of the former Ottoman Empire – and its oil resources, from Algeria to Iran. After World War II, however, Total Oil Company, the French inheritor of Compagnie des Pétroles, was cut out of the redivision of North Africa and the Middle East. Weakened by war and divided politically, France could not be a dominant force within NATO or Europe. The 1956 Suez Crisis and the American response signalled the demise of British and French influence and the advent of the American age of dominance, along with the dollar as the currency of world trade. The operating principle within NATO was that France was to be a junior partner. General Charles de Gaulle resented the Anglo-American dominance,⁴⁹ and opted for the development of an independent military capability. When the European states recovered, in the 1970s, France worked with the Germans to develop a currency and trade zone that would eventually become the European Union.

France intervened in Afghanistan as an independent military partner, and was initially critical of the US-led Coalition of the Willing in Iraq. After the vigorous defence of US capital in Iraq, with reactions about ‘freedom fries’ during the Iraq war, French military planners retreated and decided to throw their lot in with the military section of the US establishment. With French acquiescence, the rationale of the militarists for a global role for NATO began to take shape and the idea of a Global NATO was debated in military journals. One of the writers on this concept was Ivo Daalder, the US Permanent Representative on the Council to NATO since 2009. Daalder was an ambassador with an understanding of the long history of financial and military cooperation between the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the US. In an era when capital was truly transnational and the tripartite allies had no loyalty to any particular state, international capitalists wanted a new military force that was mobile and well equipped for the new scramble for African resources.

This call for a global role for NATO also came from NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who pressed NATO leaders to expand

their horizons beyond NATO's traditional focus on the North Atlantic region. A musing by defence specialists alerts us to the thinking:

The concept of a Global NATO is used above all in connection with two leitmotifs – on the one hand the idea of the alliance becoming a global strategic actor (functional globalization) and on the other the notion of a NATO whose membership is in principle global (institutional globalization). The two dimensions can, however, scarcely be separated from one another but instead are intertwined.⁵⁰

This discussion around the idea of the 'institutional globalisation of NATO' maintained that the security threats to capitalism were global and that NATO should consider itself as a 'concert of democracies' keeping the order internationally. Within these journals, the idea was floated that NATO should be expanded to include Australia, Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, and possibly Brazil. After encircling Russia, the new posture was for the encirclement of China.⁵¹

The rationale was simply that the 'operational level of NATO is the entire globe'. In 2002, NATO declared that 'to carry out the full range of its missions, NATO must be able to field forces that can move quickly to wherever they are needed, sustain operations over distance and time, and achieve their objectives'.⁵²

Despite these lofty positions of the strategic planners, NATO was bogged down in Afghanistan. Failure here, and the war of attrition, led to fatigue in the West, with numerous headlines calling for NATO to admit defeat and leave Afghanistan.⁵³ The prolonged crisis of capitalism inside the Western world meant that citizens had no appetite for an expanded imperial role.

That is, until Gaddafi – by promising to kill the citizens of Benghazi, whom he called 'rats' and 'vermin' – gave NATO the excuse it needed to seek to operationalise the idea of a Global NATO.

Muammar Gaddafi and the Elusive Revolution

Gaddafi came to power as the leader of Libya after a *coup d'état* removed King Idris on September 2, 1969. This bloodless coup was orchestrated by the Union of Free Unionist Officers under the leadership of its Chairman, then Captain Muammar Gaddafi. King Idris' rule was replaced by that of a 'Revolutionary Council', but Gaddafi emerged from the ranks of the free officers and quickly asserted his authority over the following years to become the new head of state.⁵⁴ In the 42 years that Gaddafi was in power, the politics of the society went through many twists and turns but remained relatively stable. After studying the Libyan experiment, Ruth First, the South African revolutionary historian, termed it 'the elusive revolution'.⁵⁵ This term is now most useful in grasping the zigs and zags of the Gaddafi regime over four decades, which can be said to have gone through four periods:

- 1969-1977: Period of the Revolutionary Command Council, or the period of elusive revolution*
- 1977-1988: Period of confrontation with the Western states, including the 1986 bombing of Libya by Ronald Reagan*
- 1988-2001: Period of sanctions and isolation, and Gaddafi's move to embrace African diplomatic interventions*
- 2001-2011: Re-opening to the West and the end of Gaddafi.*

During the first period, 1969-1977, society was governed by the Revolutionary Command Council. Radical initiatives occurred in this period, such as the nationalisation of oil companies and banks, and the expulsion of the US from Wheelus military base. The Libyan leadership attempted to emulate the Pan Africanism and Pan Arabism of Gamel Abdel Nasser, but within one year, in September 1970, Nasser passed away and the Libyans had no model to anchor their experiment in radical nationalism. Nonetheless, the elementary claims at recovering national wealth were seen as threatening by the imperial forces, and by 1977 the US Department of Defense listed Libya as a potential enemy of the US.⁵⁶ There was no doubt that Libya was no longer simply an outpost for Western

companies. However, the contradictory postures, alliances and partnerships that were proposed left Libya isolated because of the personalised nature of diplomacy under Gaddafi. As one author summed up this period,

Pushing his policies of anti-Zionism, anticommunism, and anti-imperialism, Qadhafi became something of a champion of reawakened Arab pride, an exemplar to many young Arabs of commitment to Arab Unity and of sincere and dedicated endorsement of the Palestinian cause. ... Such widespread admiration was nevertheless relatively short-lived. It was not long before Qadhafi had begun to antagonize other Arabs with his disregard for diplomatic convention and his inflexible insistence on the absolute righteousness of his own policies and philosophies.⁵⁷

After proposing a series of schemes to unite with Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia and Syria, the Gaddafi regime became isolated. This was especially the case with the Palestinians, in whose internal matters Gaddafi attempted to dictate.

UN sanctions and the 'conversion' of the regime

While representing himself as a revolutionary, Gaddafi exposed his lack of understanding of international politics and his own ideological limitations by his alliance with Idi Amin of Uganda and providing military and financial support to Amin when Uganda attacked Tanzania. Throughout the first twenty years of the Gaddafi regime, the Libyan government was embroiled in the internal politics of Chad, supporting differing factions and deepening the involvement of the Libyan forces in prolonged military scraps in the Aouzou dispute. The extended Libyan involvement in the military wrangles that have been journalistically termed the 'Toyota War' diverted the attention of the African freedom struggle and gave legitimacy to the French military intervention in Central Africa.⁵⁸ Gaddafi's infatuation with self-styled 'rebel' leaders and organisations brought a steady traffic of individuals such as Charles Taylor making pilgrimages to Libya. (What Gaddafi did not know was that, during his relationship with Charles Taylor, the latter was working as a US intelligence asset.)⁵⁹ Through the organisation Al Mathaba, the Libyan leadership proclaimed itself to be at the forefront of anti-imperialism, but the Green Book – the theoretical basis for this revolutionary posture – was as contradictory as the policies of Gaddafi.

On March 2, 1977, with the Declaration of the Establishment of the People's Authority, Libya was renamed the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. One author traced the twists and turns of the forms of rule of Gaddafi, who took the title of 'Guide'. This author explored the periods 1969-1977 and 1977-1988, the period of sanctions and isolation, the period of the 1990s, and the energetic period of what the author called Gaddafi's 'conversion'. This was when, after September 11, 2001, Gaddafi and his sons worked hard to ingratiate themselves with the US and Britain, and begged to make Libya an ally in the Global War on Terror. Luis Martinez described these zigs and zags as the *Libyan Paradox*.⁶⁰ Shukri Ghanem and Saif al-Islam Gaddafi were two central figures in this paradoxical relationship with the West.

As one of the Western specialists on Libya, Luis Martinez followed closely the impact of sanctions on the country that were imposed after Libya was accused of responsibility for the 1988 Lockerbie air disaster. From the moment of the tragic bombing of Pan Am flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland, there were conflicting reports from Western intelligence agencies on who was responsible. Shukri Ghanem, who had been the quintessential insider of the regime and one of the 'reformers' in the fourth period, categorically denied that Libya had anything to do with the Lockerbie bombing.

Many Western scholars have not grasped the importance of Nelson Mandela's diplomatic efforts to end the sanctions against Libya. Mandela, who by 1994 had become the President of South Africa, acknowledged Libya's support for the anti-apartheid struggles. Although he had himself been declared a terrorist by the racist white minority regime and by Western intelligence agencies, Mandela successfully mediated between the governments of Britain and the US for the lifting of the UN sanctions against Libya. The sanctions were lifted in 1999, after the Libyan government agreed to hand over 'suspects' to be tried in Europe. Nelson Mandela shuttled between Britain and Libya until he reached a breakthrough, with Libya agreeing to the principal demand – handing over the Libyans accused of placing the bomb on the Pan Am flight. One of the compromises agreed in the negotiations was that the accused would be tried outside Scotland. Hugh Roberts has discussed at great length the sophisticated diplomatic manoeuvres by the Libyan government after these negotiations, so that Libya could re-enter the Western fold without accepting responsibility for the Lockerbie disaster. According to Roberts,

It was only in 2003-4, after Tripoli had paid a massive sum in compensation to the bereaved families in 2002 (having already surrendered Abdelbaset Ali al-Megrahi and Al Amin Khalifa Fhima for trial in 1999), that sanctions were lifted, at which point a new reforming current headed by Gaddafi's son Saif al-Islam emerged within the regime.⁶¹

Roberts is among the few scholars who penetrated the diplomatic push by the Gaddafi regime to end the sanctions without admitting anything in relation to the Lockerbie affair. It is worth quoting him at great length:

It is often claimed by British and American government personnel and the Western press that Libya admitted responsibility for Lockerbie in 2003-4. This is untrue. As part of the deal with Washington and London, which included Libya paying \$2.7 billion to the 270 victims' families, the Libyan government in a letter to the president of the UN Security Council stated that Libya 'has facilitated the bringing to justice of the two suspects charged with the bombing of Pan Am 103, and accepts responsibility for the actions of its officials'. That this formula was agreed in negotiations between the Libyan and British (if not also American) governments was made clear when it was echoed word for word by Jack Straw in the House of Commons. The formula allowed the government to give the public the impression that Libya was indeed guilty, while also allowing Tripoli to say that it had admitted nothing of the kind. The statement does not even mention al-Megrahi by name, much less acknowledge his guilt or that of the Libyan government, and any self-respecting government would sign up to the general principle that it is responsible for the actions of its officials. Tripoli's position was spelled out by the prime minister, Shukri Ghanem, on 24 February 2004 on the Today programme: he made it clear that the payment of compensation did not imply an admission of guilt and explained that the Libyan government had 'bought peace'⁶²

The general line on Libya by Western scholars and analysts was that the Gaddafi regime had undergone a 'conversion', but in *The Libyan Paradox* Martinez explains in great detail how Gaddafi feared for his life. As a scholar working from French resources, Martinez would be aware of the evidence produced by French journalists of the plans by British intelligence and the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) to assassinate Gaddafi in 1996. This was only one of the many assassination plots that Gaddafi had survived after coming to power in 1969. In November 2002, the British newspaper *The Guardian* reported that 'British intelligence paid large sums of money to an al-Qaeda cell in Libya in a doomed attempt to assassinate

Colonel Gaddafi in 1996 and thwarted early attempts to bring Osama bin Laden to justice.⁶³

The evidence of the complicity between the Saudi and Western intelligence agencies in supporting the LIFG revealed the reality that the plans for military destabilisation and the removal of Gaddafi were not new, nor did they suddenly arise after the February 15 uprisings in Libya. The book *Forbidden Truth* has opened one window into the world of the relationship between actors such as the Carlyle Group, the oil companies and Libya. Condoleezza Rice, as an executive of Chevron Oil Company, was enmeshed in the web of intelligence, finance and international politics that transcended Libya. In September 2008, while she was Secretary of State, Rice visited Libya and articulated with clarity that the United States had no 'permanent friends in Libya, only permanent interests'.

Western scholars took time to study the investment of the Gaddafi family to end isolation, and particular interest was focused on Saif al-Islam, who had earned a doctorate at the London School of Economics.⁶⁴ Shukri Ghanem, Saif al-Islam and Moussa Koussa were three of the more influential sectors of the bureaucracy that promoted market reforms and were dubbed the 'neo-liberal forces' within the Libyan establishment. Gaddafi had promoted an ideological platform called the Third Universal Theory. In the 1970s, this theory drew heavily from the ideals of Arab nationalism as espoused by Nasser. Nasserism, anti-imperialism and non-alignment were supposed to anchor this Third Way between socialism and capitalism. Efforts to deepen these ideas at the political level through mergers with neighbouring states came to naught, and after the intervention of Nelson Mandela to end the isolation of Libya, Gaddafi turned to African unity as the basis of his political legitimacy. Throughout the years of the Jamahiriya, the political culture in Libya never matured to the point where there was a coherent alternative to the inherited social and economic structures. Organs such as the General People's Congress, which was supposed to be the harbinger for the establishment of a 'regime of people's power' and 'direct popular democracy' at the grassroots, never found a real base among workers, poor farmers, students and patriotic business persons. Gaddafi's inner circle stifled genuine social engagement while the Western educated bureaucrats worked to bring Libya into the fold of 'market reforms'.

The connections and discussions between the Libyan leadership and Western liberal scholars created an ambivalent relationship that exposed the hollow ideological basis of the intellectual apparatus of the leadership.

Libyan universities did not produce rigorous scholarship because of the sycophancy that was promoted nationally and internationally around the Gaddafi family. When Libya signed a multibillion dollar exploration and production deal with BP in 2007, BP promised to spend US\$50 million on education and training projects. The ambivalence towards Europe that was expressed in political rhetoric was not matched inside the educational system. Those with resources in Libya sent their children to schools in North America and Western Europe. The Al Mathaba was established as a vehicle for anti-imperialism, but this was hollow and depended on the whims and caprices of the 'brother leader'. In this situation, those who had been educated in elite Western universities dominated the bureaucracy and promoted Western-type 'democracy', neo-liberal 'reforms' so that Libya could enjoy better relations with the US and Britain. Various scholars had identified Moussa Koussa, Saif al-Islam, Mahmoud Jibril, Shukri Ghanem, Aziz al Isawi and Tarek Ben Halim as the neo-liberal reformers inside the government of Libya.⁶⁵ These functionaries had been so thoroughly schooled in Western ideas about economics that, despite the massive reserves of Libya, their mantra was that Libya needed to open up to the West in order to attract 'foreign investment capital, create free trade zones and enhance the fledgling stock market'.⁶⁶

Despite the dominance of the 'reformers,' Gaddafi's zigzags in relation to his international policies frustrated Britain and the US, who wanted to have a dominant say in the future of the Libyan economy. During the period of sanctions, European firms from Italy, Germany, Spain, Austria and Turkey had done brisk business in the oil sector, but the Gaddafi family wanted to be accepted by the US and went all out to ingratiate itself with Washington and the associated intellectual networks of US capitalism. The Al Mathaba confraternity brought together selected anti-imperialist activists from Africa, the Caribbean and North America, but many of these activists never challenged the ideas of monarchical dreams which culminated in Gaddafi declaring himself 'Kings of Kings'.⁶⁷

The neo-liberal assault on Libya

– London School of Economics and Harvard Professors

While Gaddafi publicly proclaimed himself a revolutionary, he was spending millions of dollars supporting centres for Libyan studies in Europe and the US. Many of the Libyans who came out of Western institutions were loyal supporters of the most conservative sections of the Anglo-Saxon culture. While they studied and worked in North America and Europe, they eschewed the politics of social justice. Britain held a special place in the consciousness of educated Libyans, and British leaders worked hard to emerge as interlocutors in Libya. While he was the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair had been one of the supporters of the new relationship with Libya after sanctions, and BP companies supported the probes of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. Blair was the first major Western leader to visit Libya in 2004.

Out of these new relationships, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi repaired to London and entered the world of British royalty and financial circles. He earned a doctorate at the London School of Economics, with the title *The Role of Civil Society in the Democratisation of Global Governance Institutions: From 'soft power' to collective decision-making?* Handsome donations were made to the LSE and Anthony Giddens brought to bear his considerable intellectual influence to argue that, under Gaddafi, Libya had been 'radically transformed'. This process of transformation entailed commercial relations with entities such as the Oxford Group, Ernst and Young and the consultancy firm McKinsey and Company. In 2007, BP signed the largest deal with the Libyan Investment Corporation to 'explore around 54 000 square kilometres (km²) of the onshore Ghadames and offshore frontier Sirt basins, equivalent to more than ten of BP's operated deepwater blocks in Angola. Successful exploration could lead to the drilling of around 20 appraisal wells'. In the signing statement, the BP public relations section noted that 'during this exploration and appraisal phase, BP will acquire 5 500 km² of 2D seismic and 30 000 km² of 3D seismic and will drill

17 exploration wells'.⁶⁸ It was in the context of this massive deal that BP undertook to 'spend \$50 million on education and training projects for Libyan professionals during the exploration and appraisal period, and, upon success, a further \$50 million from commencement of production. The education and training programmes will be designed and managed in partnership with the National Oil Corporation (NOC)'.

Numerous British institutions of higher learning then jumped on this opening up of the training of young Libyans, and thousands of Libyans were sent to British universities. By August 2011, the UK *Times Higher Education Supplement* reported that there were 2 800 students in the UK from Libya.⁶⁹ As the war intensified, numerous officials from differing British universities resigned when the extent of their relationships with the Gaddafi family was revealed.

Once the top cadre of the society was drawn into the 'institutional transformation' that was the gospel of Giddens, this relationship with British universities was replicated all over Western Europe and the US. Universities such as Michigan State University (MSU) and Tufts University had strong ties to the training of Libyan officials for the Gaddafi regime. Moussa Koussa, one of the leading interlocutors for the regime, had completed his Masters at MSU thirty years earlier. Through the Western links of leaders such as Gaddafi's son and the Prime Minister, the Libyan government paid handsome sums of money to promote 'institutional changes' in Libya. One major firm that was involved was the Monitor Group, a consultancy firm associated with the Harvard Business School in the US. The Monitor was awarded a contract to produce a makeover for Libya and to introduce Gaddafi 'as a thinker and intellectual, independent of his more widely-known and very public persona as the Leader of the Revolution in Libya'. The firm was also supposed to produce a book on 'Gaddafi, the Man and His Ideas', based in part on interviews between the Libyan dictator and these visiting international influentials. The book supposedly would 'enable the international intellectual and policy-making elite to understand Gaddafi as an individual thinker rather than leader of a state'.

The *Harvard Crimson* and the UK's *Guardian* newspaper reported in 2011 that, between 2006 and 2008, the Monitor Group entered into a contract with the Gaddafi regime that was worth at least US\$3 million. The Monitor had promised the Libyan regime that it would secure a 'regular flow of high-quality visitors' to Tripoli who would be selected for the appeal of their ideas and for 'the strength of their influence in guiding US foreign policy'. The high-quality visitors read like a who's who in the field of international

relations in the US. The list of individuals who were engaged in the Monitor project included Francis Fukuyama, author of *The End of History*; Richard Perle, a prominent neocon who advised President George W. Bush in the build-up to the Iraq invasion; and American academics such as Benjamin Barber, Joseph Nye and Robert Putnam.⁷⁰ The visit and writings of Joseph Nye are of particular interest, in so far as his actions and writings expose the link between ideology and militarism in the US. Saif al-Islam properly thanked Joseph Nye for his inspiration in the writing of his thesis:

I would also like to acknowledge the benefit from comments I received on early drafts of the thesis from a number of experts with whom I met and who consented to read portions of the manuscript and provide advice and direction, especially Professor Joseph Nye.

Students of international relations have in the past been captivated by the writings of Joseph Nye on 'Soft Power'. During the era of military information operations and humanitarian intervention, the ideas of soft power were promulgated to legitimise Western intervention. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the ideas of soft power became chic as strategists found this new form of intervention superior to outright 'boots on the ground' militarism. Nye outlined three ways in which the behaviour of other actors can be influenced: they can be threatened, they can be bribed, and they can be co-opted. Soft power refers to the ability to get 'others to want what you want'. According to Nye, 'since our Western liberal values determine what we want or don't want, soft power indicates the ability to determine values, that is, determine what goals actors will strive to accomplish'. A country's soft power is reliant upon the attractiveness of its culture, political values and foreign policies, all of which Nye refers to as the resources of soft power.

Critical scholars have been able to penetrate this discourse to expose the extent to which this idea of soft power seeks to conceal the coercive mechanisms of empire. Within the field of international relations, ideas of soft power obscure the real power in international politics.⁷¹ Haiti and Libya were two graphic examples of how imperial forces mobilised 'soft power' to undermine the sovereignty of these societies. Peter Hallward, in his book *Damming the Flood: Haiti and the Politics of Containment*, exposed the role of humanitarian agencies in creating the conditions for the destabilisation of Haitian society. The book brings the reader face to face with how international non-governmental organisations were central to the

containment of the Haitian project of self-determination. Soft power, in this instance, worked hand in glove with the deployment of militaristic forces.

Unlike Haiti, Libya was awash with foreign reserves and therefore could expend billions on reconstruction projects that employed productive labour. It is in the failure to deploy the usual NGOs that it is possible to grasp the significance of Joseph Nye's visits in the context of the later NATO intervention. Future historians will be able to reflect on whether Nye's visits were part of the advanced reconnaissance necessary to grasp the inner workings of the Jamahiriya. Nye recounted not only his meeting with bureaucrats of the Gaddafi regime, but also the fact that he had sipped tea for three hours with Muammar Gaddafi in 2007. He recounted Gaddafi's fascination with 'soft power':

Where once he sought weapons of mass destruction, now he has abandoned his nuclear program ... Qaddafi, in other words, seems to have become interested in soft power – the art of projecting influence through attraction rather than coercion ... And the fact that he took so much time to discuss ideas – including soft power – with a visiting professor suggests that he is actively seeking a new strategy.

From his writings after returning to the US, Nye had been successful in getting Libyan officials to uncritically accept his vision of power. David Corn, in a lengthy article in *Mother Jones* magazine, wrote of the visit of Joseph Nye,

Months later, he penned an elegant description of the chat for The New Republic, reporting that Qaddafi had been interested in discussing 'direct democracy'. Nye noted that 'there is no doubt that' the Libyan autocrat 'acts differently on the world stage today than he did in decades past. ... The article struck a hopeful tone: that there was a new Qaddafi. It also noted that Nye had gone to Libya 'at the invitation of the Monitor Group, a consulting company that is helping Libya open itself to the global economy'.⁷²

Getting Libyans to 'want what you want'

Corn's article neglected to spell out the institutional relationships between scholars such as Joseph Nye, the 'reform' agenda of the Bretton Woods institutions and the military industrial complex. To the extent that the

foreign policy establishment, through the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, acts as a sounding board for the financial, military and oil interests, it is possible to locate the role of scholars such as Anthony Giddens and Joseph Nye in Libya and Africa. After the lifting of sanctions by the US government, the regime in Libya went overboard to please US and British interlocutors, conveying to these academics the willingness of Libya to open up the economy and negotiate new partnership and exploration agreements with US petroleum companies. After 2003 the Libyan government entered into agreements with the IMF. A number of state-owned enterprises were privatised, and in 2004 Libya opened up fifteen new offshore and onshore blocks for exploration and production agreements. Eleven of the best licenses went to US companies, including Occidental, Aramco, Hess, and ChevronTexaco. Saif al-Islam employed the international vocabulary of neo-liberal capitalism – deregulation, transparency, rule of law, efficiency, markets, and those formulations which were meant to inspire confidence in the Wall Street firms that were wooing the Libyan leadership.⁷³

The ‘reforms’ increased inequality and strengthened those social forces close to the ruling circles. Class differences deepened, leading to the alienation of the mass of the population. Trade unions did not benefit from the ‘reforms.’ While Libya had opened up its economy and restored diplomatic relations, there had been no such progress in respect of trade union rights. There were – and currently are – no independent trade unions. All workers’ organisations were closely linked to the government. Samir Amin summed up the contradictions of this opening up (or, as Martinez called it, this ‘conversion’):

Operating in a still-archaic society Gaddafi could indulge in successive ‘nationalist’ and ‘socialist’ speeches with little bearing on reality, and the next day proclaim himself a ‘liberal’. He did so to ‘please the West’, as though the choice for liberalism would have no social effects. But it had and, as is commonplace, it worsened living conditions for the majority of Libyans. The oil rent which was widely redistributed became the target of small groups of the privileged, including the family of the leader. Those conditions then gave rise to the well-known explosion, which the country’s regionalists and political Islamists immediately took advantage of.⁷⁴

The same political Islamists who had been opposed by the West, the LIFG, became the instrument for the completion of the task that had been undertaken through the penetration of the ‘liberal reformers’. When the

rebellion matured, the real alliance between the LIFG was sealed in the loose alliance that was to emerge and call itself the National Transitional Council (NTC). Western intelligence agencies had up-to-date information on the LIFG because its origins emanated from the Libyan veterans who had fought against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Vijay Prashad termed this group of fighters 'America's Libyans', and drew particular attention to the role of Khalifa Hifter, who had lived in Virginia, US for two decades and returned to Libya in March 2011 to be part of the 'army' that fought against the Gaddafi government.⁷⁵ The ease with which Hifter had settled in Virginia, and his elevation to the position of commander of the NTC's army after the rebellion, raised speculations about the linkages to the Western intelligence infrastructure.

From Wikileaks cables we now know that the Western companies were playing a waiting game with the Gaddafi regime. Gaddafi's policy forced oil and gas corporations to renegotiate their contracts, so although there were openings, the Western companies lived with uncertainties. Between 2007 and 2008, major companies such as Exxon Mobil, Petro-Canada, Repsol (Spain), Total (France), Eni (Italy), and Occidental (US) were compelled to sign new deals with the NOC – on significantly less favourable terms than they had previously enjoyed – and were collectively made to pay US\$5.4 billion in upfront 'bonus' payments. A June 2008 cable exposed the fact that the Oasis Group – including US firms ConocoPhillips, Marathon and Hess – was reportedly 'next on the block', despite having already paid US\$1.8 billion in 2005. The cable questioned whether Libya could be trusted to honour the new exploration and production sharing (EPSA IV) contracts, or would again 'seek a larger cut'. It further discussed the broader implications of the EPSA IV contracts. While the contracts were 'broadly beneficial' for oil companies, which stood to make 'a great deal more money per barrel of oil produced', the threat of forced renegotiation of contracts created a dangerous international precedent – a 'new paradigm for Libya that is playing out worldwide in a growing number of oil producing countries'.

The oil giants and the US government were alarmed by threats Gaddafi made, in a January 2009 video-conference to Georgetown University students, to nationalise the oil and gas industry. A January 2010 cable recounts that 'regime rhetoric in early 2009 involving the possible nationalisation of the oil sector ... has brought the issue back to the fore'.⁷⁶

Western leaders, who were waiting for an opportunity to intervene in North Africa after the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, immediately intervened on the side of the political Islamists with the doctrine of 'responsibility to protect'

UN Security Council Resolution 1973 and the Responsibility to Protect

In Libya under Gaddafi, political opposition took a religious form and one of the more well-known opposition organisations was the LIFG.⁷⁷ This organisation included members who had aligned with the US to fight against the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. Some of its functionaries were named as beneficiaries of Saudi funds in North Africa and the Middle East. According to George Tenet, former head of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), 'one of the most immediate threats [to U.S. security] is from smaller international Sunni extremist groups that have benefited from al-Qaida links. They include ... the LIFG'.⁷⁸ Long before the US had identified violent Islamist extremists, Gaddafi had been among the first leaders to warn of the dangers of violent extremism. In 1996, Libya became the first government to place Osama bin Laden on Interpol's Wanted List.⁷⁹

In 1995, the LIFG launched a jihad against Gaddafi's regime and attempted to escalate their activities into a 'pre-revolutionary situation'.⁸⁰ With the backdrop of the years of bloodshed in neighbouring Algeria, the people of Libya had no appetite for armed rebellions with the cycle of bombings and state repression. The most significant LIFG attack was a 1996 attempt to assassinate Gaddafi. LIFG members, led by Wadi al-Shateh, threw a bomb underneath his motorcade. The group also staged guerrilla-style attacks against government security forces from its mountain bases. The response of the regime to these forms of armed opposition deepened the alienation of the regime from the peoples in the East. An effort at administrative reorganisation of the country in 1998 did not repair the weaknesses of Libya's governance structures. After 1998, the regime embarked on the 'liberalisation of the economy' and policies of decentralisation, but there was never any question that the inner circles of the Gaddafi family would loosen their monopoly over the use of force. One of the most profound weaknesses of the regime – the general lack of coherence of Libya's armed forces – raised its head. This was because the

regime was apprehensive about the 'collaboration between Islamist rebels and the security forces'.⁸¹

After September 11, 2001 Gaddafi ingratiated himself with the West and, in his 'conversion', went overboard to cooperate with Western intelligence organisations to shut down the Islamists. The LIFG was banned worldwide (as an affiliate of al-Qaeda) by the UN 1267 Committee and was listed at the Foreign Terrorist Organizations. After the NATO intervention in Libya, British newspapers carried extensive details on the level of collaboration between Gaddafi and British and US intelligence services. According to *The Guardian*,

*Papers discovered in Tripoli apparently show that MI6 gave Muammar Gaddafi's security service information on Libyan dissidents living in the UK. They also contain communications between British and Libyan security ahead of then-prime minister Tony Blair's desert tent meeting with Gaddafi in 2004. Britain is said to have helped the Libyan dictator with his speech-writing. The documents, discovered in the Tripoli offices of former head of Libyan intelligence Moussa Koussa, also show how the CIA worked with the Gaddafi regime on the rendition of terrorist suspects.*⁸²

From the *Christian Science Monitor* newspaper we also learnt that,

*Nearly 300 pages of documents, copied by Human Rights Watch (HRW) from the offices of Libya's external security service, provide unprecedented detail about how the CIA and Britain's MI6 worked closely to bring Libya 'on side' and turn a brutal regime from foe into friend after Mr. Qaddafi in 2003 vowed to give up weapons of mass destruction, end support of militant groups, and take on Al Qaeda. Part of that effort was forcibly returning to Libya key opponents of the regime – including the Libyan who today commands anti-Qaddafi forces in Tripoli – despite knowing the conditions those suspects would face.*⁸³

The details of the exchanges between the Libyan government and the US and British intelligence services are significant because these exchanges gave the West unprecedented information on the workings of the Libyan intelligence capabilities. Gaddafi had enabled the imperial intelligence services by sharing information, financing their governments, purchasing junk equipment as weaponry and cooperating with their intelligence agencies. Most importantly, these exchanges gave the West a clear understanding of the nature of the Libyan opposition.

The news about Gaddafi's cooperation with British and US intelligence services, along with their collaboration in relation to 'enhanced interrogation techniques' (translated as torture), the exchange of information and the secret transfers of opponents and 'terror' suspects, clarified the extent of Gaddafi's cooperation with the West. Significantly, one of the 'terrorists' who had been detained and rendered by Gaddafi, the LIFG leader Abdulhakim Belhadj, turned out to be a beneficiary of Western support against Gaddafi. He emerged as a prominent leader in the NTC in Tripoli, and at time of writing is the commander of NTC forces in the capital. These were the forces that the UN decided to protect in Libya.

A reconstruction of the chronology of the exchanges between the Gaddafi government and the West is essential because, just as the West rendered Belhadj to Gaddafi, so the West will change sides again. It is for this reason that the African scholarly community ought to study the chronology of Libya's Disarmament and Relations with the US leading to the lavish praise of George W. Bush for Gaddafi.⁸⁴ Gaddafi had joined the coalition of the willing in the fight against terrorism and bent over backwards to open up oil exploration contracts for US oil companies. In this way, the Gaddafi regime fully aligned itself with the US in its Global War on Terror.

The US had intensified its activities in North Africa in the face of European trade and commercial activities. Jeremy Keenan, in his book *The Dark Sahara: America's War on Terror in Africa*, elaborated in detail the role of the US military in supporting repressive governments under the guise of dealing with terrorism. Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Mauritania, Mali, Niger and Chad were able to strengthen their repressive apparatuses and to manipulate and use Global War on Terrorism (GWOT) for their own benefits and purposes. Of the states where the US Africa Command became active, all except Egypt and Libya were former colonies of France, where French arms manufacturers had a lock on the arms market. These countries exploited this so-called war on terror by cracking down on almost all forms of opposition, especially minority groups, and almost any expression of civil society democratisation. Keenan spelled out the reality that 'with no terrorism (except state terrorism) in many parts of the region, notably in the Sahara-Sahel, before the launch of the GWOT, it has had to be contrived.'⁸⁵

As the US exaggerated and fabricated the threat of al-Qaeda in the Maghreb, cooperation was extended to the political leaders who were being wooed to become part of the US economic and military orbit. France had supported the political leader of Chad and continued to maintain a strong presence in that country, but Exxon Mobil used its financial and political

muscle to produce oil in Chad with a pipeline through another client state of France, the Cameroon. France was witnessing the diminution of its influence and its political allies threatened and being removed. When Ben Ali was faced with the uprising in Tunisia, he turned to the West to argue that the uprisings were led by Islamists. When the rebellion broke out in Libya, in February 15, Gaddafi correctly claimed that some of the forces of the opposition included Islamists. However, the same Western intelligence services that had cooperated with Gaddafi were now stoking the propaganda against him and mobilised the media to argue that there was an imminent massacre of civilians in Benghazi. Within five days of the start of the rebellion, Benghazi was firmly controlled by opposition forces. 'The rebels' advance continued and by the end of February the rebels had seized Libyan air force planes and Libyan navy ships'.⁸⁶

The threat of genocide: facts and fiction

Although the Western media carried stories that the Gaddafi air force was killing its own people, the Pentagon stated categorically that it could not confirm these stories. Within the debates at the UN, South Africans argued that there had been no jets used in attacks by Gaddafi against his own civilians. On March 1, 2011, the then US Secretary of Defense, Robert Gates, and the US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Mike Mullen, gave a press conference at the Pentagon where one reporter posed the question, 'Do you see any evidence that he actually has fired on his own people from the air? There were reports of it, but do you have independent confirmation? If so, to what extent?' Secretary Gates responded, 'We've seen the press reports, but we have no confirmation of that', and Admiral Mullen added, 'That's correct. We've seen no confirmation whatsoever'.⁸⁷ In March, Robert Gates and the Pentagon were against the intervention and were willing to state that the Pentagon itself had 'no confirmation whatsoever' that jets and helicopters had been used to attack civilians.

Neither Col. Gaddafi nor his son attempted to curb the international news that the Libyan army was about to commit genocide in Benghazi at a time when the militarised nature of the rebellion had transformed an uprising into a civil war. It was in this climate that the UN Security Council debated the resolutions on Libya. UN Security Council Resolution 1970 was passed on February 26, 2011:

Expressing grave concern at the situation in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and condemning the violence and use of force against civilians, deploring the gross

*and systematic violation of human rights, including the repression of peaceful demonstrators, expressing deep concern at the deaths of civilians, and rejecting unequivocally the incitement to hostility and violence against the civilian population made from the highest level of the Libyan government...*⁸⁸

This resolution was passed unanimously by the Security Council. In February, the real situation was still unclear and all members of the Security Council agreed that it was necessary to prevent a bloodbath in Libya. The resolution imposed sanctions on the Libyan regime and a travel ban on its top leaders. It was after this resolution that the French and British propaganda apparatus went into high gear to justify the use of the term 'genocide' and encourage military intervention. Vijay Prashad noted correctly that,

*The 'humanitarian intervention' from the Atlantic states and the Gulf Arabs attempted to wrest the dynamic from the rebellion from below and from the Arab spring, in general. That it has not been able to succeed fully is a testament to the deep springs of suspicion about imperialism that linger across West Asia and North Africa and to the faith of the people in their wanting control over their own lives.*⁸⁹

Gaddafi had linked himself to the anti-imperialist traditions in Africa without fully grasping the roots of Pan Africanism and anti-imperialism. It was the anti-imperialism of the Global Pan African Movement that would become the firmest force in opposition to the Global intervention by NATO in Libya.

Efforts to persuade the AU to support the call for military intervention did not succeed, but the Western media demonised the Libyan leader to the point where there was a general belief in the West that the Gaddafi regime was on the verge of committing genocide against its citizens. Samantha Power, who had ingratiated herself into the inner circle of the Obama Administration, was the author of *A Problem From Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*. As a journalist without the rigorous historical training which could have given her a better understanding of the genocidal traditions of Western capitalism, from the time of the genocide of the Native Americans, Power had been elevated to a professorship at Harvard University through her media exposure. She was one of the foremost spokespersons for Western military intervention,⁹⁰ arguing that the US policy towards genocide had been imperfect. She set about fixing this as a member of the National

Security Council (NSC) of the Obama Administration.⁹¹ As a crusader against genocide, she worked with Hilary Clinton at the State Department and Susan Rice at the UN to promote US military intervention in Libya.

With active lobbying by the governments of Britain, France and the US, on March 17, 2011 the UN Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the UN, passed resolution 1973, from which we excerpt:

1. *Demands* the immediate establishment of a cease-fire and a complete end to violence and all attacks against, and abuses of, civilians;
2. *Stresses* the need to intensify efforts to find a solution to the crisis which responds to the legitimate demands of the Libyan people and notes the decisions of the Secretary-General to send his Special Envoy to Libya and of the Peace and Security Council of the AU to send its ad hoc High Level Committee to Libya with the aim of facilitating dialogue to lead to the political reforms necessary to find a peaceful and sustainable solution;
3. *Demands* that the Libyan authorities comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights and refugee law and take all measures to protect civilians and meet their basic needs, and to ensure the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian assistance;

Protection of civilians

4. *Authorizes* Member States that have notified the Secretary-General, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, and acting in cooperation with the Secretary-General, to take all necessary measures, notwithstanding paragraph 9 of resolution 1970 (2011), to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory, and requests the Member States concerned to inform the Secretary-General immediately of the measures they take pursuant to the authorization conferred by this paragraph which shall be immediately reported to the Security Council;

No Fly Zone

6. *Decides* to establish a ban on all flights in the airspace of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in order to help protect civilians;

7. *Decides further* that the ban imposed by paragraph 6 shall not apply to flights whose sole purpose is humanitarian, such as delivering or facilitating the delivery of assistance, including medical supplies, food, humanitarian workers and related assistance, or evacuating foreign nationals from the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, nor shall it apply to flights authorised by paragraphs 4 or 8, nor other flights which are deemed necessary by States acting under the authorisation conferred in paragraph 8 to be for the benefit of the Libyan people, and that these flights shall be coordinated with any mechanism established under paragraph 8;
8. *Authorizes* Member States that have notified the Secretary-General and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, to take all necessary measures to enforce compliance with the ban on flights imposed by paragraph 6 above, as necessary, and requests the States concerned in cooperation with the League of Arab States to coordinate closely with the Secretary General on the measures they are taking to implement this ban, including by establishing an appropriate mechanism for implementing the provisions of paragraphs 6 and 7 above,
9. *Calls upon* all Member States, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, to provide assistance, including any necessary overflight approvals, for the purposes of implementing paragraphs 4, 6, 7 and 8 above; ...

We have spelt out in great detail the contents of the resolution in order to emphasise that there was no provision for regime change in this resolution. The political justification for the no-fly zone had come from members of the Arab League, but the meeting of the League that supported the no-fly zone had been a meeting of the minority of the members of the League. Most of those who called for the no-fly zone were involved in supporting the regimes in Yemen and Bahrain, both countries whose leaders were killing their own people. The AU correctly argued that the UN should follow the lead of the AU and the Road Map that had been developed at the meeting of the Peace and Security Council of the AU on March 10, 2011.

There was much at stake for the African peoples in the challenges associated with the history of 'humanitarian protection'. Conscious of how militarism and humanitarianism had been refined by military strategists, African intellectuals and policy makers were conscious of militarists who considered Africa to be outside the 'non-integrating gap'. According to

Thomas Barnett, author of *The Pentagon's New Map: War and Peace in the Twenty-First Century*,⁹² the world was divided between the 'functioning core' of economically developed, politically stable states integrated into global systems and the disconnected areas prone to warfare and terrorism.⁹³ The thesis of the books by Barnett followed the line of argument of Robert Kaplan, who had waxed about the 'Coming Anarchy' in Africa.⁹⁴ Both Kaplan and Barnett represented one wing of the military/academic establishment that supported humanitarianism as one of the tools in the arsenal of Western militarism.

After the Rwanda genocide, in 1994, and later the wars in the Balkans, African diplomats supported the principle of UN intervention that was based on the new international norm of responsibility to protect. At the 2005 UN World Summit of the General Assembly, more than 170 Heads of State and Government accepted three interlinked responsibilities which together constitute the principle of 'responsibility to protect' (R2P):

*First, States accepted the responsibility to protect their own populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. Second, States promised to assist each other in fulfilling their domestic protection responsibilities. And third, the international community took on a collective responsibility to react, in a timely and decisive manner, if particular States are manifestly failing to protect their populations from the abovementioned mass atrocity crimes.*⁹⁵

Long before the Libyan intervention, there had been differences between scholars from the Global South, who recognised the ways in which the UN principle was manipulated by Western countries and called this R2P a redefinition of the role for kind-hearted gunmen.⁹⁶ As far back as 2007, there were scholars who had warned that while the underlying idea was a noble one, the principle was open to manipulation:

*It is thus fair to conclude that the concept currently encompasses a spectrum of different normative propositions that vary considerably in their status and degree of legal support.*⁹⁷

This elasticity was understood by the long term planners of the West, who had been surprised by the speed and thoroughness of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolts. These international strategists lost no time in pushing

through the UN resolution because, in the midst of the capitalist crisis, Libya's leader was threatening to nationalise Western interests.

One analysis of the Wikileaks cables drew attention to a 2008 cable that was particularly revealing:

The US cultivated relations with certain figures in Gaddafi's regime, and secretly discussed the benefits of Gaddafi's removal from the scene. A July 2008 cable relates how Ibrahim el-Meyet, a 'close friend' of Ghanem (and a source to 'strictly protect') told the US embassy that he and Ghanem 'concluded that there will be no real economic or political reform in Libya until al-Gaddafi passes from the political scene', and this 'will not occur while Gaddafi is alive'.⁹⁸ These cables pointed to the reality that the West had a two pronged strategy in Libya, one strategy to work closely with Gaddafi and another to work to build up information and resources to remove him.⁹⁹

This strategy emanated from the importance that the West placed on Libyan oil. Experience elsewhere, especially in Haiti in the period prior to the removal of Aristide, had demonstrated that Western intervention had a greater chance of success once popular revolts were militarised. Hence, following the first demonstrations in Libya on February 15, the militarisation of the opposition soon reached the point where the Western media could take sides in a political struggle inside of Libya. Far from protecting civilians, France had been in contact with the opposition forces in Benghazi through numerous assets on the ground, including the new activism of philosopher Bernard-Henri Lévy.¹⁰⁰

Lévy credits both Nicholas Sarkozy and Hilary Clinton with the foresight to persuade others to join in this war: 'I think this war was probably launched by two statesmen: Hillary Clinton and Sarkozy. More modestly, me'.¹⁰¹ In the same interview, Lévy acknowledged that the French military had drawn up plans for a military incursion into Libya before the events of February 2011. The UN Security Council resolutions that authorised an R2P-based intervention to protect Benghazi did not authorise outside powers to provide air support for the subsequent rebellion against Gaddafi.

African intellectuals and policy makers understood what was at stake in Libya. For African intellectuals on the left, such as those who wrote the open letter, the long-term implications of the UN mandate of R2P are worth considering in the context of the future need to protect the African population in Western Europe. The idea of the responsibility to protect was most needed in Rwanda in 1994 and later in Burundi. These were

extreme cases when the idea of national sovereignty had to be set aside and foreign intervention became justifiable. Professor Patricia Daley studied the experiences of genocidal politics in Burundi and clarified the real meaning of humanitarianism. She defined humanitarianism as 'an ethical interest in alleviating the suffering of human beings and the general human welfare of people. In times of crisis, as in war torn situations, those with the necessary means should offer assistance to ameliorate the wretched conditions of their fellow human beings.'¹⁰²

Daley penetrated the humanitarian discourses of numerous European scholars and sought to move the understanding of genocide away from the analytical framework of ethnicity, which debased African lives, to one that taps into their emancipatory capacity for peace. She drew extensively from the work of the Nyerere Foundation and the investment that Julius Nyerere had made in the long-term search for peace in Burundi. Nyerere's notion of peace was the antithesis of the market economy-promoting 'liberal peace' that was imposed on African societies by Western states and their NGOs. After Julius Nyerere passed on, Nelson Mandela embraced the idea of the emancipatory capacity for peace by promoting ideas of truth and reconciliation. Throughout his tenure as president, Mandela sought to elevate the principles of Ubuntu from the philosophical levels about forgiveness and sharing to real politics of cooperation.

In fact, Nelson Mandela made this case at his first appearance as Head of State at the Organisation of African Unity (OAU). It was in this speech, in June 1994, that Mandela called for the end of genocide in Africa as part of an African Renaissance:

Even as we speak, Rwanda stands out as a stern and severe rebuke to all of us for having failed to address these interrelated matters. As a result of that, a terrible slaughter of the innocent is taking place in front of our very eyes. Thus do we give reason to the peoples of the world to say of Africa that she will never know stability and peace, that she will never experience development and growth, that her children will forever be condemned to poverty and dehumanisation and that we shall forever be knocking on somebody's door pleading for a slice of bread. We know it is a matter of fact that we have it in ourselves as Africans to change all this.

*We must, in action, assert our will to do so. We must, in action, say that there is no obstacle big enough to stop us from bringing about a new African renaissance.'*¹⁰³

Mandela committed the government of South Africa to end the scourge of genocide in Africa. From that moment, the momentum for the criminalisation of genocide took root and the coming into being of the AU presented a united front against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes under domestic law. Africans were working hard to move the discussions about rampant violence in Africa from 'tribalism' and ethnic hatred to grasping how the integration of Africa into global capitalist networks fanned the flames of violence and crude extraction of natural resources. It was the expectation of Africans that the mandate of responsibility to protect would be guided by a new understanding of the sources of weapons in Africa and the impact of Western alliances to the forces involved with genocidal economics.

This concept of 'responsibility to protect' remained abstract, and the Western nations which led the invasion of Libya and execution of Gaddafi were cynical in the way in which they sought to act in the name of the 'international community'. In this instance, 'international community' meant the interests of Western capital. Wall Street speculators, with the corporate media as the mouthpiece about the 'international community', hid behind the diplomatic and political activities of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC),¹⁰⁴ who were in the midst of a struggle with the Libyan leadership over the Arab Banking Corporation.

Libya and the Gulf Cooperation Council

An IMF study of the banking sector in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) drew attention to the fact that Bahrain was the top banking centre in the GCC and the Arab Banking Corporation was at the forefront of wholesale banking for the region. In the words of the study, 'Bahrain also has a vibrant wholesale banking sector – the largest of which is the Arab Banking Corporation – which provides off-shore, investment banking, and project finance services to the rest of the region'.¹⁰⁵ By December 2010, Libya had become the dominant shareholder of the Arab Banking Corporation and Mahmoud Layas, a close confidant of Gaddafi's family, became the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Bahrain-based investment bank. Besides Libya, the other major investor in this bank was the Kuwait Investment Fund.¹⁰⁶

Most of the political leaders of the GCC were monarchs who, at one time or another, registered fundamental differences with Gaddafi over international questions, especially the issue of Palestine. In fact, Libya's turn to an energetic foreign policy in Africa had been in part due to Gaddafi's consideration that no major leader of the Arab world had intervened to defend and bring Libya out of diplomatic isolation the way Nelson Mandela and the African states had done. After the formation of the AU, Gaddafi threatened to pull out of the Arab League. It was only the strong intervention of Hosni Mubarak, who personally travelled to Tripoli, that kept Libya in the League.

The quarrel with Saudi Arabia was especially bitter, with the Libyan leader accusing the Saudi leadership of having a 'pact with the American devil'.¹⁰⁷ Qatar was the base for Western military and political operations in the GCC. As mentioned earlier, after the start of the war against the people of Iraq NATO had extended its reach into the Gulf region of the Middle East, through the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative that had been signed in the Turkish city in 2004. Under this initiative, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates had elevated NATO's relations with the countries of the Mediterranean Dialogue to give legitimacy to NATO's planned military

operations in North Africa and the Middle East. Slowly, the four prongs of Western control over North Africa and the Middle East were refined through the Istanbul Cooperation Initiative, the Mediterranean Dialogue, the US Central Command and the US Africa Command. NATO was brought under the US Central Command to fight against the people of Afghanistan. Egypt remained in the Central Command, while the build-up of private military contractors gave the West flexibility and plausible deniability in the planned interventions in this region. Qatar became a central location for the private contractors.

In 2008, the Emir of Qatar visited Tripoli and sought to bring closer relations between Libya and these military formations. (Working through the 'reformers' that dominated Libya's financial institutions, the West had been burrowing through Qatar, where relations had been developed between the Libyan Investment Authority and the Qatar Investment Fund.) Less than a year later, in March 2009, at the Arab League meeting in Doha, Gaddafi made quite an uncomplimentary speech on the King of Saudi Arabia over the objections of the Emir of Qatar, Shaykh Hamad Bin Khalifah Al Thani.¹⁰⁸ The Emir represented himself as a reformer, while supporting the most conservative Islamists throughout the Middle East and North Africa. It was this monarch who was at the forefront of the war against the people of Libya. Given his orientation, it was not coincidental that leaders such as the President of Sudan, Omar Bashir, were brought in as allies in the war against the people of Libya. The same Western leaders who had supported the indictment of Bashir before the International Criminal Court (ICC) were now willing to cooperate with Bashir in the military intervention in Libya.

As one of the core members of the GCC, Qatar formed the rump of the Arab League which passed the resolution calling for a 'no-fly zone' to protect civilians in Libya. Of the 22 members of the Arab League, only eleven were present when the League passed a resolution, on March 12, 2011, to support a UN no-fly zone over Libya.¹⁰⁹ Of the eleven members present, two – Algeria and Syria – opposed the resolution and nine supported it. Of these nine, six were members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and the other three were seduced by Saudi Arabia to support the resolution. The members who supported this 'no-fly zone' were no paragons of democracy, and it was well-known that the Saudi Arabia record on human rights was no better than that of Libya. In fact, at the same time there was need to protect civilians in Bahrain and Yemen.¹¹⁰ This Arab League resolution came two days after the AU, on March 10, 2011, had voted to reject foreign military intervention in Libya.

Protecting civilians or jolting for position?

Once the Arab League passed their resolution, Al Jazeera was brought in to trumpet the view that it was the Arab League that had called for the no-fly zone, and the French and British were able to push through the UN Security Council resolution, on March 17, authorising a 'no-fly zone' over Libya. The Western members of a Global NATO proceeded to interpret the resolution in any way they wished. Officially, as the text showed, the resolution was intended to give a green light for a limited intervention to protect civilians in Benghazi. However, no sooner was Benghazi secured than the military operation was expanded and became open ended. The arms embargo was brushed aside, using Qatar as a conduit for weapons supplies to the NATO special forces, and the Qatar forces who were introduced as ground forces. Russia and China had abstained in the vote, and their efforts to reconvene the Security Council to debate the implementation of resolution 1973 were dismissed.

There was good reason why the NATO members did not want to discuss the implementation of the resolution. Numerous writers and commentators have drawn attention to the fact that ten times the numbers were slaughtered in Libya than those who were going to be protected. We quote extensively from *The Guardian* in this regard:

All the while, Nato leaders and cheerleading media have turned a blind eye to such horrors as they boast of a triumph of freedom and murmur about the need for restraint. But it is now absolutely clear that, if the purpose of Western intervention in Libya's civil war was to 'protect civilians' and save lives, it has been a catastrophic failure. David Cameron and Nicolas Sarkozy won the authorisation to use 'all necessary means' from the UN security council in March on the basis that Gaddafi's forces were about to commit a Srebrenica-style massacre in Benghazi. Naturally we can never know what would have happened without Nato's intervention. But there is in fact no evidence – including from other rebel-held towns Gaddafi re-captured – to suggest he had either the capability or even the intention to carry out such an atrocity against an armed city of 700,000. What is now known, however, is that while the death toll in Libya when Nato intervened was perhaps around 1,000-2,000 (judging by UN estimates), eight months later it is probably more than ten times that figure. Estimates of the numbers of dead over the last eight months – as Nato leaders vetoed ceasefires and negotiations – range from 10,000 up to 50,000. The NTC puts the losses at 30,000 dead and 50,000 wounded.

Of those, uncounted thousands will be civilians, including those killed by Nato bombing and Nato-backed forces on the ground. These figures dwarf the death tolls in this year's other most bloody Arab uprisings, in Syria and Yemen. Nato has not protected civilians in Libya – it has multiplied the number of their deaths, while losing not a single soldier of its own.

For the Western powers, of course, the Libyan war has allowed them to regain ground lost in Tunisia and Egypt, put themselves at the heart of the upheaval sweeping the most strategically sensitive region in the world, and secure valuable new commercial advantages in an oil-rich state whose previous leadership was at best unreliable. No wonder the new British defence secretary is telling businessmen to 'pack their bags' for Libya, and the US ambassador in Tripoli insists American companies are needed on a 'big scale'.¹¹¹

One African commentator linked the issues of location, arms deals, oil and competing Western interests in North Africa as the fundamental reasons for the Libyan intervention:

People who think that the West's intervention in Libya is just another oil grab are mistaken. Broadly speaking, for Britain military intervention is mainly about arms, Italy [about] natural gas, France [about] water and for the US [about] counter-terrorism and reconstruction contracts. Spreading democracy and saving the people of Benghazi form merely tangential benefits used to justify these ends. Lest we forget, Nato's bombardment began because Mr Gaddafi threatened to do to Benghazi what Mr Bashar al-Assad's forces are doing to various Syrian cities and Nato itself is poised to do in Sirte.

'History is a set of lies agreed upon' once remarked Napoleon Bonaparte. If left unchallenged the true motives behind what the French mainstream media have coined 'Sarkozy's War' may be lost in the fog of war.

So what makes Libya so important to the West? Any real estate agent could tell you: location. Given that Libya sits atop the strategic intersection of the Mediterranean, African, and Arab worlds, control of the nation [...] has always been a remarkably effective way to project power into these three regions and beyond.¹¹¹

The concept of 'responsibility to protect' as one of the set of lies became central to the psychological warfare against citizens of the world to disguise

the colossal failures of NATO in Libya. When the strategists orchestrated the UN resolution, there was anticipation that the war against the Libyan regime would be quick and over within a month, but as the war dragged on, the psychological operations were intensified. In April 2011, Jonathan Eyal, director of international security studies at the Royal United Services Institute in London, noted that,

*Psychological warfare is being waged by Western governments in order to hasten the crumbling of the regime. The big hope for Western strategy is to avoid a drift into stalemate and avoid putting boots on the ground and hope it [the regime] collapses from within.*¹¹³

For any psychological warfare operation to have credibility there had to be some grain of truth, but the lies could not be agreed upon given the differing agendas of the French, the British and the US. There was one feature that united these NATO frontliners, and it was that the NATO intervention was based on struggles of the imperial forces in a moment of capitalist crisis.¹¹⁴ The fierce competition between French and other Western forces for control over the future of Libyan oil was so intense that, after the Qatar and Western special forces entered Tripoli, Nicholas Sarkozy announced that he would visit Benghazi and Tripoli. Britain's David Cameron refused to be left behind, so he accompanied Sarkozy, on September 15, in the neo-colonial rush to Libya. Earlier in that week, Paolo Scaroni, the CEO of Italy's energy giant Eni, had been in Tripoli to discuss the resumption of Libyan gas exports. Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan had visited even earlier, as the varying Western powers competed for political influence, strategic positions and profits. *The Guardian's* Simon Tisdall remarked that, 'in truth, like self-styled conquering heroes through history, the British and French leaders arrived in hot pursuit of victors' laurels that may, in time, produce a handy financial payback. This was, first and foremost, the Dave and Sarko spoils of war tour'.¹¹⁵

'The race is on for Libya's oil, with Britain and France both staking a claim'.¹¹⁶ This was the headline in *The Guardian* on September 1, after the NATO-backed NTC had overran Tripoli. Of the major resources for economic transformation and energy production, Libya possesses four. The first is a vast area of desert which German solar companies have been surveying for future production of solar energy for Europe. The second major resource is water. Libya sits on the Nubian Sandstone Aquifer, which is an immensely vast underground sea of fresh water. The government of Libya has invested

US\$25 billion in the Great Man-made River Project, a complex, 4 000 km-long (approximately 2 485 miles) water pipeline buried beneath the desert that could transport two million cubic metres of water a day. The third resource is oil and gas, and this is what was mainly coveted by major Western countries. Libya's fourth resource is the labour and mental faculties of its people.

The fight to control Libyan oil was the principal motivation for the NATO intervention, and it is to that aspect of this failed venture that we now turn.

Libyan Resources

Prior to the major discoveries of fossil fuel by US oil companies in the 1950s, Libya was considered a poor country whose economy was based on poor farmers and herders who were marginally integrated in the international capitalist system. So many tanks and artillery pieces had been deployed in the World War II battles that the principal export was scrap metal. After the discovery of oil, the petroleum sector in Libya was dominated by British and US oil companies. By 1957, there were about a dozen companies operating on some sixty different concessions in Libya. They included the seven majors¹¹⁷ (called the 'seven sisters' of oil, or alternatively, Big Oil) and the French parastatal Compagnie Française des Pétroles. There was also Oasis, a consortium of three companies new to international petroleum exploration, Amerada Hess, Conoco and Marathon.¹¹⁸ Following the concession awards, the Oasis companies pooled their acquisitions. By 1965, when Libya opened a second round of concession bidding, Oasis was the number two producer of oil in Libya, bringing in more than 300 000 barrels per day. The energetic activities of these Western companies expanded Libya's petroleum sector so that by 1970, at the time of the revolution, Libya was exporting 3.3 million barrels of oil per day (bpd).

Mediterranean El Dorado

Once the revolution took place, in 1969, the Libyan government started to tax the oil companies but the intransigence of the latter speeded the processes of nationalisation and control by the Libyans. As Anthony Samson outlined in his book *The Seven Sisters: the Great Oil Companies and the World They Made*,

*It was not in the established oil countries of the Persian Gulf that the sisters faced their first critical showdown, but in Libya, the upstart oil producer on the edge of the Arab world in North Africa. For Libya broke up the ranks on both sides. It had let in the independents to challenge the sisters; and it was aloof from the cautious attitudes of the rest of OPEC. It was the outsider at both ends and by ignoring the rules it changed them.*¹¹⁹

After the 1973 war between Egypt and Israel, the Libyan regime began to take an aggressive position in the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and by 1979, the example of radical nationalisation established by Libya had been followed by Iran, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Over the fifteen-year period after the revolution in Libya, countries such as Iraq, Venezuela, Nigeria, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates fully nationalised the holdings of the Western oil companies.¹²⁰ The leadership of Libya within institutions such as OPEC led to confrontations with the West, culminating in the 1977 ranking of Libya as number 4 in the list of potential enemies of the US.¹²¹ From this ranking, it followed that the differences between the countries expanded to the point where the Reagan Administration bombed Libya in April 1986, in a clear effort to eliminate Gaddafi.¹²²

From the era of the bombing to the Western initiated sanctions over the Lockerbie flight, the question of the future of the Libyan oil was followed closely by European oil companies, which moved in to profit from the standoff between the Libyans and US companies.¹²³ Throughout the 18 years of sanctions by the US government, the Oasis Group maintained covert and overt linkages with the Libyan political establishment and worked through third parties or other institutions. The group's members – Occidental Petroleum, ConocoPhillips, Marathon Oil, and Amerada Hess – represented the 'independent' oil companies that held leases on gas and oil reserves that were managed by Libya's National Oil Company.

While he still headed Halliburton Company, Yahya Zoubir, in his analysis of *Libya in US Foreign Policy: From Rogue State to Good Fellow?*, correctly predicted that the US government was working for the physical liquidation of Libya's leader. When the US Congress passed the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, in 1996, the oil companies complained that non-US companies would be the beneficiaries of this legislation. During that period, Richard Cheney – who was to become US Vice President in 2001 – was the CEO of oil service giant Halliburton. Cheney gave speeches denouncing the American policy on economic sanctions, describing it as counterproductive in many cases.¹²⁴ Some of the US oil companies never left Libya. It was reported in US papers that Halliburton had remained in the country, working through its international web of subsidiaries to evade US restrictions on their operations in what they knew was the rich petroleum resources of Libya.

In the book *The Crude Continent*, Duncan Clarke described Libya's resources as follows,

*Libya is well endowed with oil and gas resources, located close to European markets. Five major onshore sedimentary basins offer a range of venture potential: Ghadames, Marzuk, Kufra, Marmarica and Sirte. In the offshore area are the Sabratah, Benghazi, and Bayda basins. The Sirte basin is by far the most prolific oil province, one of the largest in Africa. Even during sanctions it was the target and operations focus for many European players as well as state companies. The days of unlimited competition enjoyed by these companies have come to an end.*¹²⁵

Libya became heavily dependent on the hydrocarbon industry, which accounted for more than 95 per cent of export earnings. By the middle of the 1990s, with information on massive new discoveries of petroleum in Libya, the US oil companies renewed their efforts to return to what was seen as the Mediterranean El Dorado. It became known that Libya had one of the largest proven oil reserves in Africa and about 3,4 per cent of the world's proved reserves – and most of it was unexplored. According to the *Oil & Gas Journal*, by 2010 Libya had total proven reserves of 46.4 billion barrels of oil, possibly the largest in Africa. 'Close to 80 per cent of Libya's proven oil reserves are located in the Sirte basin. ... Libya's proven natural gas reserves as of January 1, 2011 were estimated at 54.7 trillion cubic feet'.¹²⁶

The analysis of Libyan resources is available in the mouthpiece of the petroleum industry, the *Oil & Gas Journal*, and from the platform of the industry, the US Energy Information Administration. From the point of view of the energy importing states of Western Europe, Libya's oil sector enjoys two important advantages. First, the country is located on the opposite side of the Mediterranean Sea and close to European markets. Despite efforts to diversify Europe's energy mix, most European countries remain heavily dependent on imported oil. Geographical proximity means that Libyan oil is easy and cheap to import. This is related to the geo-political point about location mentioned above. Second, unlike a large proportion of oil from the Persian Gulf region and elsewhere, Libya produces one of the highest-quality low-sulphur oils – light and sweet crude. Generally, this crude is the easiest to process and can be run by relatively 'simple' refineries that may not be able to handle heavier or sourer substitutes. In short, Libya's importance to the oil market stems not only from its substantial production, but also from the light sweet quality of its crude grades.

By the beginning of the century, the liberal elements within the Gaddafi government had reached to the top echelons of the oil and banking sectors of the Libyan economy. It was in concert with these 'liberal reformers' that the Gaddafi regime skilfully returned to the Western fold, after the

UN sanctions were lifted in April 1999. Western oil companies competed vigorously to enter the Libyan energy markets and the Libyan government used its resource as a tool of foreign policy. In the writings of one scholar, Libya opened the door for American oil companies to return to Libya in December 2003:

*The US government lifted some trade sanctions the following April, and restored diplomatic ties in late 2004. Virtually all remaining trade sanctions were lifted in September 2004. At that point the only sanctions still in place were certain export restrictions related to Libya's retention on the Department of State list of state sponsors of terrorism. ... Improved commercial and diplomatic relations enabled US oil companies to resume activities in Libya.*¹²⁷

This author then went on to explore how the government of Libya negotiated the Exploration and Production Sharing Agreements (EPSA) with international oil firms. When the sanctions were lifted, Libya was producing only 1.5 million bpd and the objective of the government was to return to 3 million bpd by 2020. In the process, the Libyan government opened three rounds of EPSA IV with the US oil companies receiving the bulk of the concessions.

*In addition to Exploration and Production Sharing Agreements, Libya also developed a bilateral model to stimulate foreign investment and to accelerate the development process. Its negotiations with Occidental Petroleum in 2003-2004 and Royal Dutch Shell 2004-2005 are two successful examples of the bilateral approach. More recently, British Prime Minister Tony Blair, during a May 2007 visit to Libya in which he said commercial relations between Great Britain and Libya were going from 'strength to strength,' announced a \$900 million contract returning British energy giant to Libya well over three decades after its assets were nationalized in 1971. The seven-year exploration and production agreements covered seventeen exploration wells, together with the acquisition of 30,000 square kilometers for survey.*¹²⁸

This skilful use of bilateral agreements under EPSA and Development Production Sharing Agreements meant that the government of Libya (although divided) maintained the initiative in its dealings with international oil companies. In May 2003, Libya's National Oil Company offered 43 blocks in 26 areas. Some 120 international companies expressed interest in bidding.

With nineteen successful bidders, the second round marked a greater diversity of winners. Italy's Eni took the largest number of permits. Other successful bidders included Exxon Mobil, the BG Group of the United Kingdom, China Petroleum and five Japanese companies. After a third bidding round for EPSA IV covering fourteen areas and forty one blocks, ... twenty three companies from fifteen countries bid for contracts in round three, with Russia's Tafneft taking three of the fourteen contracts offered, and Russia Garzpon taking one. Taiwan's state owned China Petroleum Company, Canada's PetroCanada and Germany's Winterhall also took one contract each.¹²⁹

As Duncan Clarke noted in his book, the openings from 2004 onwards transformed the Libyan game. The EPSA IV brought in the cream of the oil industry to Libya, while the Libyan government widened the mix of the countries involved.

It has been a shrewd game, played by Libya with finesse and largely on its own terms. The outcome has been to establish the country as a major exploration destination not just in Africa but in the world.¹³⁰

The one country that did not do well in this oil and diplomacy round was France. But if France was kept out of the Exploration and Production Sharing Agreement, French water companies had their sights on the vast groundwater aquifers in Libya.

Libya's groundwater resources and the Great Man-made River Project

Less than six months after the execution of Muammar Gaddafi, the British Geological Survey (BGS) made known to the world what the Libyans already knew: that Libya was sitting on the largest water reserves in Africa. *The Quantitative Maps of Groundwater Resources in Africa* declared to the world that 'Groundwater resources are unevenly distributed: the largest groundwater volumes are found in the large sedimentary aquifers in the North African countries Libya, Algeria, Egypt and Sudan'.¹³¹ Of these, Libya possessed by far the largest volume of groundwater – 99 500 km³, compared to Algeria with 91 900 km³, Sudan with 63 000 km³ and Egypt with 55 200 km³.¹³² These four countries form part of the vast underground sea of fresh water called the Nubian Sandstone Aquifer.

The Libyan state invested US\$25 billion in the Great Man-made River Project, a complex 4 000 km-long water pipeline buried beneath the desert that could transport two million cubic metres of water a day. The objective of this, the largest engineering project in Africa was to turn Libya – a nation that is 95 per cent desert – into a food self-sufficient arable oasis. Prior to the publication of the BGS report, Western scholars and scientists had used the issue of ‘war scarcity’ in Africa as psychological warfare to promote the privatisation of water. Screaming headlines such as ‘Water map shows billions at risk of “water insecurity”’ were reproduced as international relations scholars wrote about water wars in the 21st century.¹³³

Western transnational corporations such as Bechtel from the US, Germany’s RWE and France’s Veolia, Suez and Lyonnaise des Eaux have been at the forefront of the call for the privatisation of water resources. French companies such as Suez, Odeco and Saur control more than 45 per cent of the world’s water market. For these companies, Libya and the region of the Nubian Sandstone Aquifer should be within the French sphere of influence. The capitalist crisis had a severe impact on France and the ruling elements were looking for areas to shore up France’s ‘prestige’.

France and Libya

At the moment of the Libyan intervention, the French society was glued to a long-running soap opera scandal about the history of the corrupt practices and the financing of elections in France by African leaders. For years there had been trials in France on the role of the French oil company ELF in Africa. ELF managers had been found guilty in one of France's biggest corporate crime trials. Former Elf Aquitaine executives were sentenced to five years in prison for using company money as bribes. In the 45 000 pages of documents for the trial there were reams of information on the role of ELF in Africa and how this oil company was an arm of the French foreign ministry.

Libya had kept ELF at arm's length, but in the era of the 'conversion' of the Libyan leadership, Libya became part of the international oil producing countries that assisted in the financing of the French presidential elections. Thus Libya joined the Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon as supporter of the conservatives in France. At the outbreak of the NATO intervention, news came out of the millions of dollars spent by the Libyan leadership to finance the election of Nicholas Sarkozy. Days after Sarkozy became the foremost advocate of the rebellion in Benghazi, Saif al-Islam, the son of the Libyan leader said,

*Sarkozy must first give back the money he took from Libya to finance his electoral campaign. We funded it. We have all the details and are ready to reveal everything. The first thing we want this clown to do is to give the money back to the Libyan people. He was given the assistance so he could help them, but he has disappointed us. Give us back our money.*¹³⁴

This allegation against the then French President was only one of the many scandals that had come to light about illicit funds, bribes and kickbacks. French imperial activities in Africa had been the most pronounced among the former colonial European powers, and this imperial outreach transcended ideological divisions between left and right in France. Without Africa's wealth, France would be a minor power with as much influence as Austria.

There were six major ways for the projections of the exploitative relationships between France and Africa. Firstly, and most importantly, there was the cultural and psychological posture based on the supremacy of Europe and the role of France as the base of enlightenment and civilisation, including the revolutionary traditions of liberty, equality and fraternity. Through cultural institutions of imperialism (especially through formations such as *la Francafrique*), the leading capitalists in France were able to entrench the politico-diplomatic, strategic and economic interests of the top one per cent of French society.

The second major form of domination, which reproduced the first, were the financial and commercial ties that protected French commercial operations in Africa. Thirdly, there was the political alliance between the comprador elements in Africa and the French bourgeoisie. Through cultural institutions such as the French schools and universities, the leaders of Francophone Africa looked to Paris in the same way as they disregarded the social needs of their own societies. Whether in dress, diet, speech or marriage ties, the African leaders from former French colonies were known to be especially servile to the interests of France. This alliance reinforced the fourth mode, which was to ensure a steady supply of cheap and coerced labour from Africa at the bottom of the French economy. The largest numbers of such workers were from the North African states of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia, and from Mauritania and the border societies of West Africa. The fifth form of domination was the supply of cheap raw materials, minerals and food for France. All of these five forms of domination were sealed by the sixth, and possibly the most consistent: French military occupation and interventions in Africa.

From the period of the war against the people of Algeria up to the military intervention in Libya and Cote d'Ivoire, France stood out as the state that has intervened and been involved militarily in Africa more often than any other outside power. More than thirty years ago, Robin Luckham documented the multiple layers of 'French Militarism in Africa'.¹³⁵ This interventionist policy to support dictators such as Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire had been covered up by discourses on 'security agreements', 'military cooperation' or defence pacts. France maintained a string of bases in the former colonies and performed direct support operations from these bases to those rulers who were in partnership with France. In the 60-year period from the counter-revolutionary war against the peoples of Algeria up to 2011, France intervened more than 150 times in Africa.¹³⁶

Throughout Africa, the scandals and corruption of France were only surmounted by the support of the French government for those who committed genocide in Rwanda. Chilling and unequivocal evidence from multiple sources detailed the complicity and participation of French military and political leaders in support of the 1994 Genocide.¹³⁷ In the context of NATO's colossal failure in Libya, it is worth recalling that the support of France for genocide had been justified on humanitarian grounds. While the Clinton Administration lobbied the UN to withdraw UN personnel from Rwanda at the moment of the real need to 'protect civilians', France had organised support for those who were carrying out genocide under a supposedly 'humanitarian mission' called Opération Turquoise. It was this support for the *genocidaires*, more than anything else, that would disqualify France from any role in protecting civilians from genocide. The complete disregard for, and dehumanisation of, African lives was summed up by the remark of former President Mitterrand, who, in response to a journalist, said that 'in countries like that genocide is not so important'.¹³⁸

Following the embarrassment of its support of the *genocidaires* in Rwanda in 1994, the French military establishment kept a low profile and sought to gain respectability for its military interventions in Africa by seeking international mandates, such as UN missions. French military activities in Africa after the Rwanda genocide were framed within the context of what was called the Reinforcement of African Peace-keeping Capacities (RECAMP) programme. The RECAMP programme was deliberately placed under the auspices of the UN and coordinated with the Organisation of African Unity. Its avowed purpose was to increase the military capacity of African countries to engage in peacekeeping operations, should they wish to.

In the face of the declaration of the US to establish the Africa Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI), in 1996, France and Britain joined together in the December 1998 Saint-Malo summit. As early as the period of the war against the Algerian people, France and Britain had signed a series of military agreements, in Nairobi and Dakar, to preserve European interests in Africa. These two states overreached during the period of the nationalisation of the Suez Canal when they allied with Israel to attack Egypt. The rebuke of the US was sobering, especially for Britain, because soon after the Suez debacle, President Eisenhower withheld financial support for Britain and there was a run on the pound. The British currency lost its position and became a junior supporting actor for the dollar in the international financial system.

Given its vulnerable position, Britain decided to act as a junior partner of the US in Africa and worked effectively through officer training programs and the deployment of special forces such as the Special Air Services (SAS). During the 1990s, after Germany had united and the EU seemed to be taking off as an alternative to the hegemony of the US, Britain and France promised to set aside past rivalries and work together on African issues to protect European imperial privileges in Africa.¹³⁹ In December 1998, France and Britain issued the St-Malo Declaration, which laid the foundation for the creation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) as the military arm of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU.¹⁴⁰ Under this Declaration, the French and the British decided in Saint-Malo to enhance their 'cooperation' in Africa.

US strategic planners did not readily accept the legitimization of France for its interventionist policies, and foreign policy bodies such as the Council on Foreign Relations from time to time gave long treatises on the French Military in Africa.¹⁴¹ When the US decided to be more competitive with the member states of the EU by establishing ACRI (the precursor to the US Africa Command), France objected.¹⁴² In a study of the French response to the launch of AFRICOM, Niagale Bagayoko concluded that, 'With the launching of AFRICOM, the French officials are faced with a new challenge: keeping the American hard power as far as possible from what it still considers as France's exclusive sphere of influence. For this reason, AFRICOM may experience some difficulties in developing strong and constructive relationships with francophone African countries, still closely tied to France.'

We have already drawn reference to the aggressive counter-terror operations in North Africa by the US that ensnared the leaders of the countries of the Sahara. Slowly, in observing the unfolding of the hegemonic intentions of then US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and Vice President Dick Cheney, France sought to develop a new front through the UN to cooperate with UN peacekeeping forces in operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, all the while seething that Rwanda had left the umbrella of a Francophone country to become an Anglophone one. By the time AFRICOM was established, in 2008, France was cooperating fully with the US while stepping up its cultural and commercial presence in Africa.

One golden opportunity for the French to put their image as defenders of those who committed genocide in Rwanda behind them came in the Republic of Côte D'Ivoire, when France sought a UN mandate to maintain

and sustain its forty-year military presence in the country. In 2011, Laurent Gbagbo became another enabler of overt French intervention by his intransigence over vacating the Ivorian presidency. Sarkozy eagerly went in to 'restore democracy'.

For decades, France had mooted the idea of the Union for the Mediterranean (a multilateral partnership that encompasses 43 countries from Europe and the Mediterranean Basin) to extend its power in North Africa. The US, working through NATO, had kept its options in North Africa open through the establishment of the Mediterranean Dialogue. According to NATO's web platform in Brussels, 'NATO's Mediterranean Dialogue was initiated in 1994 by the North Atlantic Council [and] currently involves seven non-NATO countries of the Mediterranean region: Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia'. The task of the Dialogue is to (a) contribute to regional security and stability, (b) achieve better mutual understanding, and (c) dispel any misconceptions about NATO among Dialogue countries.¹⁴³ Because the state of Israel was one of the seven countries involved in this Dialogue, the other six countries had to keep the existence of the Dialogue out of the news media. Libya under Gaddafi had refused to be drawn into any Dialogue with Israel and steadfastly called for an AU. France was threatened by the idea of a Union of the peoples of Africa that was calling for total independence everywhere, including the Western Sahara and the home of Frantz Fanon in Martinique.

France had worked closely with the monarchy in Morocco to block the independence of Western Sahara because it coveted the wealth of the North African region. More importantly, French oil companies had been left behind after Gaddafi opened up Libya's petroleum sector to other Western firms. As noted above, the skill of the Libyan National Oil Company had ensured that no foreign oil company dominated the oil sector as the French did in countries such as Gabon. Before the lifting of sanctions, Italian oil companies had done a brisk business and they watched very closely the operations of Total, the French oil company. 'Before global opening Eni was Libya's largest foreign company, accounting for 17% of oil/gas production'.

In 2004, Gaddafi paid a visit to the European Commission in Brussels, at the invitation of Romano Prodi, then President of the European Commission. Italy was a supporter of the French concept of the Mediterranean Union, and both countries were working together to bring Libya into the Euro-med partnership which was being promoted by France. There had been disagreement inside the EU on the question of Libya's invitation as far back as 1999, and in response to the dispute as to whether Gaddafi was ready for

the privilege of joining the European Mediterranean partnership, Gaddafi made his clearest statement with respect to the future of Libya and Western Europe:

The European experiment is of no use to us ... the area known as North Africa should be Africanised. Either it will become a part of Africa or it will be an anomaly, and will therefore have no future. As an inhabitant of North Africa, I have always rejected the Barcelona agreement which regards North Africa as part of the Middle East, with a vocation to integrate with Europe. This is a conspiracy against the integrity of Africa. They have said to me the Barcelona agreement and cooperation with the European Union will be to Libya's advantage. They want to draw us in and to make use of us, through the Barcelona agreement, to dismember the African continent, stealing North Africa to make it join with the European Union. This is unacceptable. In any case, look at what has already become of the Barcelona agreement. It is in a comatose condition and could well disappear.¹⁴⁴

France opposed the idea of the AU and kept open the possibility of Morocco becoming a member of the EU as a carrot to undermine the AU. France supported Moroccan occupation of the Western Sahara and doubled down in its security cooperation with states such as Morocco and Tunisia.

Even before the Italian, British and US oil corporations were competing with Russian, Chinese, Indian and Turkish interests in Libya, German industrial and financial power was stronger in Libya than the French. The Germans had not been passive in the period of the promotion of the Euro-Mediterranean partnership. The German-led Desertec Industrial Initiative was being orchestrated to tap solar energy from the Sahara and supply Europe with 15 per cent of its energy needs by the middle of the century. Hence, far from acquiescing to the French-led Mediterranean Union, Germany had been pursuing its own interests in North Africa and the Middle East, and these interests clashed with those of France. To articulate German interests, the German Institute for International and Security Affairs published a study on 'German Middle East and North Africa Policy'. It stated that 'Well into the 1990s the Maghreb still occupied a marginal position in German foreign policy, with no sign of a clear formulation of German interests. However, in the past decade the region's importance for German foreign policy has grown steadily.'¹⁴⁵

France was not happy with this growth of German interest in North Africa. More importantly, the French felt slighted by the treatment of France

in its negotiations over the compensation package for the victims of a French commercial airliner bombed over Niger in 1989. The crash killed 170 people, including 54 French citizens. In the negotiations, France had been in a hurry to come to an agreement with the Libyan authorities:

The amount of financial compensation following the judgment of the Cour d'Assises in Paris was 211 million Francs, of which 73 million had been reserved for those who had brought civil suits. This resulted in a figure of 35,000 dollars per victim. Unsurprisingly, the French government accepted this figure. For both the French and Libyan authorities, an end seemed now to have been put to the affair. ... French public opinion became more inflamed when the Lockerbie families obtained a global sum quite out of proportion with that reached under the terms of the Franco-Libyan agreement: 2.7 billion dollars or 10 million dollars per victim. From then on, the French position changed, and – surprisingly – though France favoured Libya's rehabilitation, France threatened to block the lifting of UN sanctions, if Libya failed to increase its compensation for the families of the victims.¹⁴⁶

As Louis Martinez rightly pointed out, Libya had played hardball with the French and had held out that for them the matter was closed. However, after September 11, 2001 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003, the Libyans changed their stand and were eager to enter into good relations with the US. France was adamant with the discrepancy, which said that one US citizen was worth US\$10 million while one French citizen was worth US\$35 000. France pressed until the Saif al-Islam Foundation came up with additional resources and Libya agreed to give each French family one million dollars each. By December 2007, relations between France and Libya had improved to the point where Gaddafi made a grand state visit to France – the first in 34 years. During that visit, Sarkozy worked hard to cement over US\$4.5 billion in business agreements, over and above those worth US\$10 billion that had been signed earlier that summer (in July, Nicholas Sarkozy had flown to Tripoli to meet with Gaddafi and had signed agreements including a deal on building a French nuclear reactor in Libya).

As the self-declared gendarme of Europe in Africa, France was taken aback by the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt in January 2011. Michèle Alliot-Marie, Sarkozy's foreign minister, had spent her Christmas holidays in Tunisia, and when the uprisings began France offered support to Ben Ali, the leader of Tunisia, in the form of French security forces expertise for a Tunisian police force that was beating and killing protesters. However, the removal of the Ben Ali dictatorship was too swift, and soon thereafter the

Egyptian revolution changed the military balance in world politics. NATO panicked and Sarkozy took the initiative to mobilise for the intervention in Libya. NATO's intervention in Libya served many purposes, but primarily that of securing more unlimited access to oil and water while gaining a hold on its strategic location between three continents.

Philosopher go-between

French intellectuals had simmered as they watched the access that their British and US counterparts enjoyed in Libya. Bernard-Henri Lévy, the self-styled French philosopher who had been in close contact with the leaders of the 'rebellion' in Benghazi, has written his own memoir on how he guided this rebellion. One reviewer who critiqued his book observed,

Not content with priding himself on a good war, the author claims, pretty much, to have run it. He it was who arranged for France to recognize the National Transitional Council, he who saw to it that the rebels were properly armed, he who publicized the atrocities in Misrata after derring-do visits, he who drafted declarations and diplomatic communications for the Benghazi regime, and assured unity among the rebels by bringing mutually distrustful tribes together. And above all it was Lévy, the President's éminence, not so much grise as flauntingly ubiquitous, who guided his master's hand throughout.¹⁴⁷

In this era of instant publishing we have the first-hand account but as an unflattering portrait of Lévy, which revealed that, 'through reports in *Le Monde*, the countervailing perspective of the French bureaucracy has since emerged: They were planning a Libyan intervention all along, and Lévy's actions were a sideshow'.¹⁴⁸ Just as, in the era of the seizure of Tunisia and other African lands, French bankers were fronts for politicians, so the picture has emerged of how this philosopher acted as an important go-between, linking Hilary Clinton to the 'rebel leaders'.¹⁴⁹ Even before the UN resolutions, he had travelled to Benghazi, building connections with the elements who later called themselves the National Transitional Council.

France worked closely with Lebanon and royal emissaries from Saudi Arabia to ensure the passage of the Arab League resolution on the no-fly zone. France was the first country in Europe to recognise the NTC (on March 10) as the government of Libya. French intelligence must have known that the Executive in the US was preoccupied with the question of the capture of Bin Laden and hence had delegated the question of Libya to sections of the National Security Establishment, who were divided as to the course of action to take. While the UN Security Council was meeting in New York in March, the government of France convened a summit in Paris to organise 'support' for the 'rebels'. At the end of the meeting on Saturday, March 19, President Sarkozy announced 'without consultation' that French aircraft were in action over Benghazi. Within two hours, French aircraft were in action against Gaddafi's forces. At this time, both the US and the British were trying to ensure that they maintained good relations with other members of NATO, but France forced the issue of military intervention.

While the White House dithered, sections of US oil and banking elements who had been involved with the Libyan Investment Authority were calling for the involvement of the US. After the French leapt into action, the US and Britain could not be left behind. Wall Street had too much at stake. Goldman Sachs had taken major risks with the money from the LIA. US oil companies had been spooked by the tenacity of the bilateral negotiations of the Libyan National Oil Company. France was also trying to cut the power of the Wall Street firms that had been at the forefront of the financialisation of energy markets. While the military in the US were lukewarm to the idea of entanglement in Libya, the oligarchs of Wall Street had their own fish to fry in Libya.

Libya and the Financialisation of Energy Markets

The history of the financialisation of energy markets followed the trail of the explosion of new financial products that were being invented by Wall Street in the aftermath of deregulation. During the period after the Reagan Revolution, there were a series of mergers and acquisitions and in this period financial institutions increased their influence and power over the political process. The general term of financialisation is described as the process when value can mainly be generated by financial instruments like derivatives, collateralised debt obligations (CDOs) and credit default swap (CDSs) which are controlled by the financial sector. In the book *13 Bankers: The Wall Street Takeover: the Next Financial Meltdown*, Simon Johnson explored at great length the process by which financial institutions increased their political power in the US through lobbying efforts, through the revolving door with Washington and through the institutionalisation of the idea that a large financial sector was the best thing for the US economy.

13 Bankers was a call for drastic reforms of the financial services industry. This industry has in the past been one of the strong forces dominating the policy-making establishment in the US. In this book, Johnson spelt out the political and ideological power of the financial oligarchy when he explained how the bankers influenced policy making:

*The first was the traditional capital money, which wielded its influence already via campaign contributions and lobbying expenses. The second was human capital: the Wall Street veterans who came to Washington to shape government policy and shape a new generation of civil servants. The third and perhaps most important was cultural capital: the spread and ultimate victory of the idea that a large, sophisticated financial sector is good for America.*¹⁵⁰

Together, these powerful forces gave Wall Street a degree of political influence that no other payoffs to corrupt politicians could have bought. What this book neglected to mention was that by the time financialisation captured the ideological space, the US had been transformed from a

military industrial complex to a financial military complex. We can grasp this decline in the importance of industries to the US by the decline in importance of the industrial sector. By the time of the financial crisis in 2007-2008, the concentration and centralisation of capital reached the point where the financial services industry played a larger part in the US economy than it did in 1950. In 1950, finance and insurance in the US accounted for 2,8 per cent of the US Gross Domestic Product, according to US Department of Commerce estimates. By 1960, that share had grown to 3,8 per cent and by 1990 it had reached 6 per cent. By 2010, finance accounted for 8,4 per cent of GDP.

These bankers had been successful in influencing policies with the belief that efficient markets were the route to prosperity. For three decades, the bankers and their think tanks had promoted the idea that countries had accepted the mantra that 'developing countries should abandon restrictions on the flow of capital and open their economy to foreign money'. Saif al-Islam and the 'reformers' in Libya accepted this mantra and sought to enter the finance sector of the world economy by setting up their own financial vehicle, the LIA. In short, these Libyan 'reformers' had accepted neo-liberalism, and the LIA was the actual vehicle to support this new turn of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

In the midst of the NATO operations in Libya, Global Witness brought to the public the investment position for the LIA as of 30 June 2010, which stood at US\$53 billion. The information showed the diversity of Libyan assets held by major financial institutions, the place of hedge fund speculators and the extent to which Libya had become a base for the provision of collateral for the oil and banks who had flocked to Libya after the establishment of the LIA.

In order to break down this dominant place of finance it is important to link this growth to a period of neo-liberalism where, over several decades, financial leverage tended to override capital (equity) and financial markets tended to dominate over the traditional industrial economy and agricultural economics. The futures markets, hedge funds and derivative products had blossomed, along with new instruments that were conjured by financial wizards called 'quants'. The increasing dominance of the finance industry in the sum total of economic activity could be measured in every area of the economy, but for this analysis we are specifically interested in the financialisation of energy markets and the close alliance between the banks and the oil companies.

Investment houses and Big Oil

The history of the power of big oil and the importance of Western oil cartels had been discussed at great length by politicians, policy makers and sections of the non-aligned movement. Throughout the period 1945–1980, the powers of the Seven Sisters and their dominance by the US and Britain had stimulated jealousy in Europe, especially among the French and the Italians. The tag of ‘seven sisters’ was, in fact, first popularised by Italian oil tycoon Enrico Mattei. The work by the Italians and the French to break into this circle of seven soon led to the acceptance of Italy’s Eni and France’s Total into the circle, to create a grouping of nine big and powerful Western oil companies: Exxon (Esso), Shell, BP, Gulf, Texaco, Mobil, Socal (Chevron), the Compagnie Française des Pétroles (CFP-Total) and Eni. Anglo-American capital could not fully manage the terrain of nationalism and militarism in North Africa and the Middle East, and the Italians and French brought added European diplomatic and political muscle to recover from the turbulent period of the OPEC embargos and the revolution in Iran.

In the book *The Tyranny of Oil*, the author traces the power of the oil companies after the mergers brought back the kind of concentration which had existed before the anti-trust legislation in the US. During the Reagan revolution, the oil companies had grown stronger and had weakened any form of regulation by the US government. Despite the spectacular failure of the energy company Enron, the oil companies employed the former Enron employees to deepen the processes of financialisation. It was in this period that the teeth were pulled from the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC). In 1974, following the hearings in Congress subsequent to the OPEC embargo and rise in oil prices since 1973, Congress created the CFTC as an independent agency with the mandate to regulate commodity futures and option markets in the US. The agency’s mandate has been renewed and expanded several times, but in the era of liberalisation and over-the-counter trading, the oil companies organised their own agency, the Intercontinental Exchange (ICE).

The extent of the link between the banks and the oil companies came to the fore during hearings in Congress after July 2008, when there was immense volatility in the price of oil and the role of the banks as crude oil speculators came to light.¹⁵¹ ‘As the banks lost billions in the subprime mortgage debacle (largely caused by deregulation and market speculation) they are moving aggressively into energy trading’. The hearings before the Senate revealed to US citizens the extent to which the oil companies had

worked to weaken the CFTC and establish the ICE.¹⁵² (The ICE is now largely owned by BP, Shell, Total/Fina/Eni, Goldman Sachs and Morgan Stanley, among others.) In these hearings, US lawmakers heard from Professor Michael Greenberger how 35 per cent of US-based trading in West Texas Intermediate Crude oil futures has shifted to 'dark markets', completely unregulated, by agreement with Britain. These markets operated out of London and Dubai. As we will see later, this alliance between the emirates and the manipulators of the price of oil was the driving force for the NATO intervention in Libya.

The hearings had been called in the wake of the financial crisis of 2008, when open contracts for commodity-based financial derivatives – like Commodity Swaps traded at the New York Mercantile Exchange (NYMEX) – rose from US\$700 million to US\$3.3 billion. While the NYMEX is an official institution which requires control of these speculations, over-the-counter trades of commodity derivatives which are not under scrutiny of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) increased as well. After the Senate hearings, the Senators acknowledged their impotence before the financial power of the alliance of Big Oil and the banks. Senator Carl Levin said,

*The commodities futures markets have become an orgy of speculators, a carnival of greed.*¹⁵³

It was in this carnival of greed that the Libyan leadership entered. In the 1970s, Libya had been at the forefront of the nationalisation of Western petroleum interests. Now, in the era of neo-liberalism, Libya wanted to enter the game of energy trading and was swallowed by it.

The Libyan Investment Authority

In the period which Martinez deemed the 'conversion' of the Libyan leadership, the political reformers of Libya established a Sovereign Wealth Fund to diversify the holdings of foreign reserves and to effect greater control over the investment portfolio of the Libyan government. From the official web page of the LIA we learnt that 'The LIA ... is a Libyan government organisation established on August 28, 2006, by the GPCO (General People's Committee of Libya) to manage the value of Libya's oil revenues and to diversify the dependence of national income. It is a holding company that manages investment funds of the government coming from

the oil and gas industry in various areas of the international finance market.¹⁵⁴

At the outset, the Libyans were concentrating on the country they knew: Italy. Gaddafi made eleven visits to Italy, where the Italians promised to pay reparations and Gaddafi undertook to be the police for Europe in preventing would-be immigrants from crossing the Mediterranean. Soon after the establishment of the LIA, Libya took stakes of between 2 per cent and 3 per cent in Italian bank UniCredit and Italian aerospace and defence company Finmeccanica. It also took a 7.5 per cent stake in the Italian soccer club Juventus. Other notable investments included a 0.7 per cent stake in Belgian financial group Fortis, a 3 per cent stake in British publisher Pearson and a 1 per cent stake in Russian aluminium company Rusal. By 2010, the LIA had amassed over US\$53 billion in assets held in different parts of the world. It was later estimated that the Libyan government held approximately US\$200 billion in investments throughout the world.¹⁵⁵

The oligarchs of Wall Street ached to get their hands on the funds of the LIA, and the tale of this 'dalliance' remains one of the lesser-told aspects of the war against the people of Libya. One can read from the *Wall Street Journal*, the principal financial newspaper in the US, how the LIA lost money, and the acrimonious fallout of these losses:

*In early 2008, Libya's sovereign-wealth fund controlled by Col. Moammar Gadhafi gave \$1.3 billion to Goldman Sachs Group to sink into a currency bet and other complicated trades. The investments lost 98% of their value, internal Goldman documents show. What happened next may be one of the most peculiar footnotes to the global financial crisis. In an effort to make up for the losses, Goldman offered Libya the chance to become one of its biggest shareholders, according to documents and people familiar with the matter. Negotiations between Goldman and the Libyan Investment Authority stretched on for months during the summer of 2009. Eventually, the talks fell apart, and nothing more was done about the lost money.*¹⁵⁶

Along with exiled Libyans, the suitors from the academic world had promoted the importance of free markets and investments, and their students in the Libyan bureaucracy entered the game even in the midst of the information that the securitisation of mortgages and the housing crisis had exploded. As documented in the book *Predator Nation: Corporate Criminals, Political Corruption and the Hijacking of America*, the US financial sector had become a rogue industry:

Much of the new wealth of the U.S. financial sector was acquired the old fashioned way – by stealing it. With each step in the process of deregulation and consolidation, American finance gradually became a quasi-criminal industry, whose behavior eventually produced a gigantic global Ponzi scheme – the financial bubble that caused the crisis of 2008. It was literally the crime of the century, one whose effects will continue to plague the world for many years via America's economic stagnation and Europe's debt crisis.¹⁵⁷

Despite the evidence of the collapse of the Western financial system, the academics and think tanks continued to promote the ideas of unregulated capitalism and that this crisis was a temporary recession. These believers accepted the refrain that the capitalist crisis was a temporary setback and that the dodgy trades would soon yield profits. From a *Wall Street Journal* article and investigations by the British NGO Global Witness, we learnt that,

Goldman soon carved out a new business with the Libyans, in options – investments that give buyers the right to purchase stocks, currencies or other assets on a future date at stipulated prices. Between January and June 2008, the Libyan fund paid \$1.3 billion for options on a basket of currencies and on six stocks: Citigroup Inc., Italian bank UniCredit SpA, Spanish bank Banco Santander, German insurance giant Allianz, French energy company Électricité de France and Italian energy company Eni SpA. The fund stood to reap gains if prices of the underlying stocks or currencies rose above the stipulated levels.

But that fall, the credit crisis hit with a vengeance as Lehman Brothers failed and banks all over the world faced financial crises. The \$1.3 billion of option investments were hit especially hard. The underlying securities plunged in value and all of the trades lost money, according to an internal Goldman memo reviewed by the Journal. The memo said the investments were worth just \$25.1 million as of February 2010 – a decline of 98%.¹⁵⁸

The acrimony that followed has a direct bearing on the relationships between Wall Street and the Libyan leadership. Even after these losses, Goldman wanted to continue to engage with the LIA.

In May 2009, Goldman proposed that Libya get \$5 billion in preferred Goldman shares in return for pumping \$3.7 billion into the company according to fund and Goldman documents. Goldman offered to pay the Libyan Investment Authority between 4% and 9.25% on the shares annually for more than 40 years, which

would amount to billions of dollars more. Libyan officials prodded Goldman to recoup their losses faster. They also worried about whether it was wise to invest in Goldman given the collapse of Lehman and the resulting panic that swept global financial markets, the fund documents indicate. After four all-day meetings in July 2009, the two sides agreed to a rejiggered deal that would make back Libya losses in 10 years. Such a deal, which also could have left the fund with a Goldman stake, would have needed to be run past the Federal Reserve. That left both Goldman and fund officials worried about its viability.

Goldman changed its mind a week later, having second thoughts about the terms, according to a person familiar with the situation. That August, Goldman proposed some other options to Libya, including investing in other U.S. financial firms and in a 'special-purpose vehicle' tied to credit-default swaps, a form of insurance against losses on loans and bonds. The Libyan Investment Authority decided that those options were too risky. Fund officials said they wanted to put the \$3.7 billion into high-quality bonds. So Goldman devised another special-purpose vehicle in the Cayman Islands that would own \$5 billion of corporate debt, according to a Goldman document prepared for the fund.¹⁵⁹

Goldman Sachs was trapped and had little room for manoeuvre, but the Libyans were the ones with the resources. With the full knowledge that the financialisation project was orchestrated through the financial sector in Dubai, the LIA moved to consolidate its position in the 'dark markets' world of the emirates. Libya had entered into the opaque world of financing energy markets and, because it was awash with funds, could move internationally in ways beyond the control of Wall Street or London. After December 2010, the Central Bank of Libya took the controlling position in the Arab Banking Corporation based in Bahrain. The Arab Banking Corporation was owned by the Kuwait Investment Authority, the Central Bank of Libya, Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and other shareholders with minor shares. Any move for making independent decisions in the Arab Banking Corporation threatened the web of speculators in the derivatives industry that depended on the recycling of petrodollars from the oil rich nations of Kuwait, Libya and the Emirates. Libya had gone for the jugular, by seeking to capture the base of the Intercontinental Exchange. After February 17, when the Libyans started to move to divest their funds from their over-exposure with British and US financial institutions, there came the freezing of Libya's assets, prior to the façade of protecting Libyans by Britain, France and NATO.

The NATO Campaign

At present, very few reports have linked the Libyan dominance in the Arab Banking Corporation to the seismic events in Libya since February 2011. Those writers and analysts from Wall Street with the links to the think tanks that they financed were front and centre in the call for war. Although Samantha Power was pushing for war from within the National Security Council of the Obama Administration, the military top brass and the Pentagon were not on board. The division within the national security establishment in the US was on full display when the Defense Secretary told West Point officers in training that, 'In my opinion, any future defense secretary who advises the president to again send a big American land army into Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should "have his head examined", as General MacArthur so delicately put it.'¹⁶⁰ Later, while the battle over the decision of a no-fly zone was being debated in the press, Gates again made the case against overt military involvement in Libya, warning that America should avoid another big, intractable land war like those underway in Iraq and Afghanistan. In his testimony before the House Appropriations Committee, he said,

*Let's just call a spade a spade, a no-fly zone begins with an attack on Libya to destroy the air defenses. That's the way you do a no-fly zone. And then you can fly planes around the country and not worry about our guys being shot down. But that's the way it starts.'*¹⁶¹

The US Treasury froze Libyan assets worth US\$30 billion, hoping to placate Wall Street and the forces in the US that wanted full-scale military involvement. But the oil and banking lobby in the US were not satisfied with half-measures. With the manoeuvring of Bernard-Henri Lévy and Hilary Clinton, Sarkozy decided to make the question of military intervention a *fait accompli*. France's Chief of Defence said that military operations would last a matter of 'weeks' and hopefully not 'months'. The military leaders in the US were declaring that if they were going to be involved, it would be in a limited manner. However, Sarkozy was not going to await the outcome of US deliberations and political manoeuvring. France acted and started bombing Libya even before agreement was reached.

The war was launched on March 19, and officially ended on October 31. Through those seven months of warfare, NATO's forces could not explain their objectives to Africans or to the rest of the world. After the third day of bombing, when the tanks and air capabilities of the Libyan regime had been degraded, it was clear that the mission went beyond the UN Security Council mandate of 'responsibility to protect'.

By June 27, when the NATO bombings – 150 sorties every day – were becoming counterproductive, the bank and oil forces became desperate and turned up the propaganda heat against Libya and Africa. It was an intensified operation integrating psychological warfare and propaganda which proved beneficial for NATO in relation to European and North American citizens, but alienated Africans and created a base of support for the Libyan government. The propaganda war to demonise and criminalise Gaddafi and his family took the form of an indictment by the ICC at the end of June, 100 days after the ineffective bombing campaign. This indictment was also meant to undermine the diplomatic efforts of the AU and derail the AU Road Map for peace talks.

The irony was that there was an ICC indictment against Gaddafi and his family for crimes against humanity, while NATO accepted the support of the President of Sudan, who had himself been indicted by the ICC in 2009.

Under the leadership of Jacob Zuma, the President of South Africa, the AU had been vigorous in seeking a negotiated settlement. In June, Zuma met NATO Secretary-General Anders Fogh Rasmussen in Russia and pressed the case for the AU Road Map, calling for a ceasefire. By this time, Gaddafi had agreed to step aside in order to facilitate negotiations. NATO would not countenance the role of the AU as a mediator. Rasmussen's response was that he was implementing the UN resolution – even though the objectives of the resolution had been achieved. For the backers of the war, when Tripoli was overrun by troops from Qatar and special forces from France and Britain the objective of the war became clear: the execution of Gaddafi. In the following sections of this monograph, we will analyse the stalemate, the psychological warfare against Libya, the pre-emption of the AU mediating team, the takeover of Tripoli, and the execution of Gaddafi.

War in Libya: Europe's confused response¹⁶²

Within hours of the passing of the UN resolution on the 'responsibility to protect', France launched air strikes against the forces of the Libyan

government. From the British military pundits we have this assessment of the actions of President Sarkozy on March 19:

*At the end of the meeting, however, President Sarkozy announced to the world's media and without consultation with either of the allies who he had been with only minutes before that French aircraft were in action over the city. Within two hours, French forces had engaged Qadhafi's tanks and armour in a dramatic series of attacks which halted the immediate advance of the government forces on Tripoli.*¹⁶³

This was the start of a confused military campaign that, despite the confusion, took thousands of African lives. According to the Royal United Services Institute, this French attack was considered 'grandstanding' because, as one British military platform stated, the attack was designed to force the hand of 'Downing Street and Washington'.

After the French attack at 6pm, US and British submarines launched Tomahawk missiles at fixed targets throughout Libya at midnight.¹⁶⁴

Within days, the German military announced that it was pulling forces out of the operation, then dubbed 'Operation Odyssey Dawn', because there was disagreement as to who would lead the campaign. France had taken the lead to launch air strikes, but there was no guarantee that France could sustain a prolonged attack. The British news media carried the details of the protest by Germany, who demanded that the Libyan operation be a European operation. The *Daily Mail* reported on March 23 that,

*Today the German defence ministry announced Berlin had pulled out of any military operations in the Mediterranean. A ministry spokesman said two frigates and two other ships with a crew of 550 would be reverted to German command. Some 60 to 70 German troops participating in NATO-operated AWACS surveillance operations in the Mediterranean would also be withdrawn, according to the ministry. Berlin isn't participating in the operation to impose a no-fly zone in Libya and abstained on the U.N. resolution authorising it.*¹⁶⁵

This information three days after the start of the military operation was an indication of the deep divisions. France wanted to limit NATO's role, and instead proposed a 'war committee to oversee operations'. For the French Foreign Minister, Alain Juppé, this committee would bring in foreign ministers of the participating states such as Britain, France and the US as well as the small number of rulers who were speaking to the Arab League.

The question of 'who's in charge' was so blatantly and directly related to who would reap the fruits of this military engagement that the head of the Italian Senate's defence affairs committee, Gianpiero Cantoni said that 'the original French anti-Nato stance was motivated by a desire to secure oil contracts with a future Libyan government.'¹⁶⁶

France had jumped the gun, and there was disagreement immediately as to the operation's objectives. France wanted to maintain control and exclude Turkey, a competitor in the Mediterranean region and a state that France had campaigned to exclude from the EU. Turkey wanted the operation to be limited, immediately criticising France by saying that what had been sanctioned at the meeting in Paris, on March 18, had 'gone beyond what had been sanctioned by the UN Security Council Resolution'.¹⁶⁷ In this tussle, the Italian Foreign Minister, Franco Frattini, warned that 'Italy would take back control of airbases it has authorised for use by allies for operations over Libya unless a NATO coordination structure was agreed'.¹⁶⁸ Italy understood that French leadership in the operation was a threat to its long term interests in Libya.

Even while this bickering and fracturing was going on, however, bombs were raining down on Libyans at the rate of about 150 sorties per day. By the end of this unlimited bombing of Libya, in October 2011, 9 700 bombing missions had been carried out. In September, after the 'capture of Tripoli', NATO's interim report stated that 'Since the beginning of the NATO operation (31 March 2011, 06.00GMT) a total of 26,323 sorties, including 9,658 strike sorties, have been conducted'. This was an average of 150 air strikes per day against the people of Libya, killing hundreds – if not thousands – of people.¹⁶⁹

In fact, from the pages of the International Institute of Strategic Studies (IISS) we learnt that after the first two days, the objective of protecting civilians in Benghazi had been achieved.

*NATO aircraft rapidly secured air dominance by nullifying the regime's air force and ground-based air defences. On the first day, 19 March, the advance of regime forces towards Benghazi, the rebel capital – where Gadhafi had promised to wreak horrible revenge – was stopped. Attacks then targeted the regime's military capacity, including its armoured vehicles, artillery, short-range ballistic and surface-to-air missiles, command and control infrastructure, communications assets and munitions dumps.*¹⁷⁰

Once the objectives of the UN Security Council resolution had been achieved – that is, the restricted mandate to protect civilians – the objectives of NATO became confused, and driven by the unwritten plan to change the regime and execute Gaddafi. The IISS noted, ‘The objectives of the nations involved were confused. Some countries participated with more than the mandate in mind – in other words, they sought Gadhafi’s removal.’ A career officer of the British army, Chief of the Defence Staff General Sir David Richards, questioned the legality of targeting and killing Gaddafi. For this questioning, he was rebuked and ‘slapped down’ by British Prime Minister David Cameron, who opined that Gaddafi was a legitimate target for assassination. US Defence Secretary Robert Gates joined in this dispute, saying it would be ‘unwise’ to target the Libyan leader, adding cryptically that the bombing campaign should stick to the UN mandate.¹⁷¹

While these disputations were being carried on in the media, Germany, Poland, Turkey and Spain (frontline members of NATO) opposed the French action and had their own links to the Libyan leader. Germany had led the other allies within the EU to oppose France’s lead. France had successfully led the war in the first salvos, but like the Italians, the US oil and banking forces did not want to wake up with France in the dominant position in Libya. Hence the political and military objectives of the Libyan war were confused. US generals, with their eyes fixed on the quagmire in Afghanistan, were to enter into a protracted war, but Sarkozy forced their hands even before the debates inside the US had been resolved. ‘The US played a supporting role, but this involved the deployment of key military assets including intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) platforms, and tanker aircraft, all of which were essential elements of alliance operations. The campaign therefore raised important questions about objectives, as well as about the nature and future of the NATO alliance’.¹⁷²

European workers, faced with the capitalist depression where the banks were calling on the governments to impose austerity measures, were lukewarm toward the Libyan operation, so the invaders had to find novel ways for intervening. This intervention then took the form of bombings by NATO, disinformation campaigns, an alliance with Bashir from Sudan, on-the-ground special forces from the French and British commandos, and air and ground support from Qatar. The entire NATO operation in Libya depended on precision weapons, because there were no leaders who had the full support for ground troops.

We quote again from Western strategic reports:

The tactical air campaign was initially shaped to protect civilian lives, in accordance with the UN mandate. As such, it was a gradualist and coercive approach, and not one that was designed to remove Gadhafi from power rapidly. However, the latter goal appeared to be the implicit desire of the main countries involved – France, Britain and the United States. On 15 April, Cameron, Sarkozy and US President Barack Obama wrote jointly in a newspaper article: ‘Our duty and our mandate under UN Security Council Resolution 1973 is to protect civilians, and we are doing that. It is not to remove Gadhafi by force. But it is impossible to imagine a future for Libya with Gadhafi in power’.

Once the April 15 letter made it clear that the objective of the US, Britain and France was to remove Gaddafi, there were even more serious divisions within NATO as countries such as Poland refused to participate in this campaign. Of the twenty-eight members of NATO, the majority refused to participate in this military operation. Most members understood the reasons for Sarkozy's energy. Some voiced their opposition and reservations in private, but Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk, in drawing attention to the inconsistencies and hypocrisy of leaders who earlier had fêted Gaddafi, declared that the attack on Libya was for oil.

Although there exists a need to defend civilians from a regime's brutality, isn't the Libyan case yet another example of European hypocrisy in view of the way Europe has behaved toward Gaddafi in recent years or even months? That is one of the reasons for our restraint ... If we want to defend people against dictators, reprisals, torture and prison, that principle must be universal and not invoked only when it is convenient, profitable or safe.

Poland was a staunch NATO ally who had sent troops to Iraq and also committed more than 2 300 troops to Afghanistan. The sentiment that the Libyan intervention was about oil was shared by other members of NATO, so that there were only 8 members – Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, Norway, Spain, the UK and the US – that participated in this operation (called ‘Operation United Protector’). Even those participating in the aggression against the people of Libya could not agree on a command structure, so the US put up its Africa Command as the front and called their operation ‘Operation Odyssey Dawn’. When the US understood that the military campaign would be protracted, the Pentagon decided to maintain its key role, but presented to the public the fiction that it was NATO that was carrying out this mission.

Prior to the designation of this opportunistic and confused military campaign, the French had called their action 'Opération Harmattan'. The British called their involvement 'Operation Ellamy', while the Canadians termed theirs 'Operation Mobile'. Such divisions in the Command structures created confusion, and more than once, the bombing of innocent civilians. When the US decided to give up the public dominant role, the Libyan operation was placed in the hands of NATO and called 'Operation United Protector'. Italy had to be mollified and kept within the alliance with the US and Britain so that it would not join with Spain and Germany in opposing this illegal action over Libya.

It is worth parsing the statements of the President of Poland, who was making a direct criticism of the objectives of France in Libya. The French oil company Total, successor to Elf, hoped to obtain access to a large share of Libya's oil reserves, and in this way edge out the role of others such as the Germans, Turkish and Spanish oil interests in Libya. Total had been weak against the competition from other European oil companies – Spain's Repsol, Italy's Eni, Germany's Wintershall (a unit of BASF) and Austria's OMV. With the full throated support from 'humanitarians' such as Bernard Kouchner, who had declared that the Libyan crisis had shown how a united Europe can be used as a force for common good, the traditional left in Europe supported this military operation.

French forward planners and strategists had been in touch with opposition elements in Libya (working with Bernard-Henri Lévy) and it was Sarkozy's calculation that a quick application of power from the air would tip the balance; the Libyan 'rebels' could then do the drive triumphantly into Tripoli – it was the expectation that, with French air power, the 'rebels' would finish the Libyan leadership within a week. France was mindful of the fact that Tunisia's Ben Ali had crumbled within one week. It was this calculation that had led France's Chief of Defence to declare that military operations would last a matter of 'weeks'.

But the Libyan regime did not crumble within a week. Despite the bombing, because the 'rebels' did not comprise a coherent political formation, there was constant bickering and recriminations between the three leading imperial states as their interlocutors jockeyed with different factions of the NTC. Britain and the US had been so close to Gaddafi that they were at a disadvantage vis-à-vis the contacts of Bernard-Henri Lévy, but the British did not want to be left out. Italy allowed NATO to use Italian soil to launch bombing campaigns, while at the same time supporting the Gaddafi family with logistics and other forms of support under the radar.

When it was reported that the NTC was starting to export oil from terminals in the East at Tobruk, Italian oil interests not wanting to be left behind travelled to Benghazi to secure the dominance of the Italian companies in the oil business. Eni chief Paolo Scaroni flew to Benghazi, where he 'had contacts with the Libyan National Transitional Council to restart cooperation in the energy sector and get going again the collaboration with Italy in the oil sector'. On March 23, 2011, less than a week from the start of the bombing campaign, an interim government was formed by the Council. This interim government was at once recognised by France, Qatar, The Maldives and Italy.

Within the US, although the US military had launched Tomahawk missiles, the question of the nature and form of the US military intervention was far from finished. Some sections of the military, especially those in the Africa Command, went on television to voice support and to claim that AFRICOM was coordinating the war in Libya. These claims were meant to shift the balance in the debate because the justification for military intervention was more delicate. The mobilisation of the international peace forces against NATO was an important consideration for the planning of Operation United Protector. Within the US, there were deep divisions.

The divisions within the US

The Obama Administration was caught between three competing interests. The first was represented by the forces of Big Oil that had established the Intercontinental Exchange. Big Oil and the forces involved in the 'financialisation of energy markets' represent the top one per cent in the US. The loudest call for the ouster of Gaddafi came from the forces who said that Gaddafi had to go and undermined all efforts by the AU to organise a negotiated settlement. From the conservative think tanks there was consensus that the US must fully engage the war in Libya.

The second interest in the US policy making establishment was the Pentagon. Sections of the Pentagon, along with the National Security Council, opposed the US involvement. The then Secretary of Defense Robert Gates told West Point cadets in February 2011 that, 'In my opinion, any future defense secretary who advises the president to again send a big American land army into Asia or into the Middle East or Africa should "have his head examined."¹⁷³ The Pentagon was afraid of being bogged down in another war. This speech was delivered before the media blitz which called for NATO's intervention and before the Gulf Cooperation

Council and the Arab League pushed through their call for a no-fly zone. The Secretary of Defense testified before Congress that an operation such as that of Libya was below the capabilities of the US, and that the Pentagon was quite willing to be part of the bombing campaign. With memories of the lack of popular support for the military during the war against the people of Vietnam, the top military planners wanted to walk a tight rope between the rank and file and those generals who understood the dalliance with Goldman Sachs. While sections of the punditry supported the killing of Gaddafi, Robert Gates had opposed this act, stating that this was beyond the UN mandate. Those who disagreed with Gates waited quietly in the knowledge that in less than three months he would be resigning.

The position of the top brass of the Pentagon had been echoed quite early by James Clapper, the Director of National Intelligence in the US. Clapper told the US Senate that Gaddafi's superior military force would prevail over the long term. He also said that one possible outcome could be the splitting of Libya into three autonomous states. While the Director of National Intelligence was equivocating on the nature of the NATO operation, the CIA was deploying special forces to Libya, to fight beside the 'rebels.' At the same time, this divided US intelligence was sending a signal to its assets in the Gaddafi circles that the CIA would still be keeping in close touch with them. The head of National Intelligence predicted that Gaddafi would prevail even while the head of Obama's NSC was on the phone every day calling on Moussa Koussa to defect. The anticipation was that this defection would trigger internal opposition to Gaddafi. Moussa Koussa predicted a Somali type partitioning if there was no political solution to the uprising. He did defect a few weeks later.

By the end of March, Robert Gates and Admiral Mullen were testifying that the US military would support a scaled down version. Congressional representatives pressed both leaders on the cost, goal, duration and legality of the mission, but there was no clear answer as to the extent of US long-term commitment. At that time, on March 30, there was the expectation that the operation would be over in a few weeks. One writer in the examination of the internal disputes among the leaders of the US over Libya wrote,

Within the Administration, Robert Gates, the Defense Secretary, was the most strenuous opponent of establishing a no-fly zone, or any other form of military intervention. Like Scowcroft, Gates objected to intervention because he did not think it was in the United States' vital interest. He also pointed out a fact that many people didn't seem to understand: the first step in creating a no-fly zone

*would be to bomb the Libyan air defenses. Clinton disagreed with him and argued the case for intervention with Obama. It was the first major issue on which she and Gates had different views.*¹⁷⁴

The third position of the US administration came from the humanitarian hardliners – Samantha Power (Special Assistant to the President and member of the National Security Council), Susan Rice (Permanent Representative of the US to the UN) and Hilary Clinton (Secretary of State).¹⁷⁵ These forces had been trumpeting the call for the exit of Gaddafi even though the US did not have a mandate for ‘regime change’ under the UN resolution. The Obama Administration, in the absence of leadership to oppose the partitioning of Libya, gave publicity to professors who warned that ‘humanitarian wars, like all wars, tend to escalate’.

We now know that, throughout this debate on Libya, Barack Obama was in a delicate discussion with his own military about the best way to deal with Osama Bin Laden. For six months prior to the storming of the Bin Laden compound in Pakistan, Obama had been locked in fierce disagreement with his own military as to the best way to carry out that mission in a Muslim country.¹⁷⁶

In the analysis of this author, what tipped the balance for the escalation of the war was the lack of unanimity among the peace and justice forces internationally. With French ‘humanitarians’ such as Bernard Kouchner rallying the wavering left in Europe, there was confusion in the ranks of the peace movement about the objectives of NATO.¹⁷⁷ With the endorsement of Kouchner, France was able to play ‘hawk’, while Germany demurred, as the Europeans waged another war with Africa using the diplomatic recognition of the NTC as the legitimisation for the war. The forceful role of France and Britain undermined any legitimacy for the NTC in its representation of itself as a liberation movement fighting to oust Gaddafi. As a fighting force the NTC was disorganised, but they were able to mobilise the early diplomatic recognition of France and Italy as bargaining chips to garner continued military support.

The Italians had travelled early to Benghazi to ensure the flow of oil supplies. Bernard-Henri Lévy had been an activist for French interests and the US oil companies strategized as the NATO bombs were being dropped. The Italians had to move swiftly because the US Treasury had made it clear that opposition oil sales would not be subject to the sanctions imposed on Col. Gaddafi’s government. With the full understanding of the potential for France to seek to have oil from the east sold in the Euro currency, US

Treasury officials cautioned leaders of the NTC that the US dollar should be the currency for the oil trade. The US Treasury was too sophisticated to say this openly, of course, instead using language like 'the rebels would have to create a payment mechanism' that was acceptable.

In the final analysis, the combination of the future of the dollar, the outstanding differences between the LIA and the future of the US oil companies was too potent. The Obama Administration supported the mission in the new foreign policy posture that had the New Yorker magazine describing the President's actions in Libya as 'leading from behind'. Some sections of the US peace movement continued to oppose US involvement, but the corporate media worked to marginalise any opposition in US society to the relentless bombing of Libya.

Under resolution 1973 of 2011, the UN had widened its economic sanctions against the regime of Muammar Gaddafi – including, for the first time, the oil sector. In addition to the no-fly zone and the threat of air strikes, the resolution also stipulated freezing the assets of the Libyan National Oil Company. While the state-owned NOC controlled the majority of the country's oil production, international oil companies were crucial for the sustenance output through joint ventures. The NOC was also in full control of at least two of its subsidiaries, its wholly-owned Sirte Oil, a joint venture with US-based Occidental Petroleum, and Waha Oil, a joint venture with American oil companies ConocoPhillips, Marathon and Hess. Unlike in the 1970s, when US oil companies were dominant internationally, oil companies from Brazil, India, China, Japan, Turkey and a host of other countries were waiting to move in to sign new deals with Libya's NOC. The presence of these companies meant that the Libyan political leadership had the option of nationalising the oil in the face of the international sanctions. Urgency for the success of the NATO bombing missions in Libya accelerated after the passing of the UN resolution. One day after, the *Financial Times* reported that 'Oil companies fear nationalisation in Libya':

Western oil companies operating in Libya have privately warned that their operations in the country may be nationalised if Colonel Muammer Gaddafi's regime prevails. Executives, speaking on condition of anonymity because of the rapidly moving situation, believe their companies could be targeted, especially if their home countries are taking part in air strikes against Mr. Gaddafi. Allied forces from France, the UK and the US on Saturday unleashed a series of strikes against military targets in Libya. It is certainly a concern. 'There are good reserves there', said one executive at a Western oil company with operations in

*Libya. We have lost some of our production [because all operations have stopped] but our bigger concern is what will happen to the exploratory work as that gives you a future rather than the immediate impact.*¹⁷⁸

The objectives of the bombings were not only to cripple the Libyan military infrastructure, but also to precipitate the exodus of workers in the Libyan economy whose presence acted as a base of support for normal economic activities. Of the more than 600 000 workers, 280 741 were third-country nationals. The only third-country nationals who were not evacuated were African migrant workers. They suffered in two ways: they were bombed and beaten from the air, and on the ground they were accused of being mercenaries. The AU made representation on behalf of these migrant workers, but it was the desires of oil executives that prevailed.

The private warnings of the executives of the oil companies that the events were moving too rapidly were reproduced in loud cries from within the US Congress for President Obama to invoke the War Powers Act in order to receive Congressional support for US participation in the war. However, the White House and the Pentagon did not want an open discussion of the role of the US military in this operation. The Pentagon had moved to a new form of warfare, where special forces were linked to private military organisations. According to the *Washington Post*, the US had deployed special operations forces in 75 countries, from South America to Central Asia. In the evolution of this new form of military intervention, small states such as Qatar became important launching pads for the new forms of war. Qatar is not a member of NATO but its military became central to the operations in Libya.

Divisions beyond NATO and in the Mediterranean region

Within a week from the start of the bombing campaign, the Secretary General of the Arab League, Amr Moussa, said that while he supported a no-fly zone, 'the Arab League was against aerial bombing in principle'. This opposition from the main political lifeline of this NATO war induced even more recriminations and panic at the military level. Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin likened the bombing campaign to the 'medieval crusades', while Turkey echoed this line. Turkey had been opposed to the French political leadership and was mollified by the British. Hence, although Turkey did not play a frontline role, it became a member of the so-called

Libyan Contact Group so that it would not be left behind after the bombs stopped raining on the Libyan people.

Recriminations started between these 'partners', with some claiming that others were not pulling their weight. Some NATO members opposed the military engagement, arguing correctly that NATO was exceeding its mandate by the bombing of Libya. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu stated that air strikes launched by France had gone beyond what had been sanctioned by the UN Security Council resolution:

There are UN decisions and these decisions clearly have a defined framework. A NATO operation which goes outside this framework cannot be legitimized. It would be impossible for us to share responsibility in an operation that some authorities have described as a 'crusade'.

This language on a 'crusade' from a key ally of NATO reflected the disquiet that emerged after two months of relentless bombing by NATO. In any other war, this kind of bombing would have been termed terrorism. By the beginning of June, as differences among NATO leaders widened, US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates pressured the Germans to give more support. A summit of NATO foreign ministers agreed to continue the 10-week-old bombing campaign 'as long as necessary', while Robert Gates and NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen pushed for other NATO member states, including Germany, Poland, Turkey and Spain, to join in the bombing of Libya. Before the summit, Tripoli had been subjected to relentless bombardment over a 48-hour period, with warplanes striking the Libyan capital 62 times. The daylight air strikes underscored that Libya, its air force and air defence system devastated by earlier attacks, remained virtually defenceless in the face of the US-NATO blitzkrieg. Hundreds of innocent citizens perished in these bombing raids.

Professor Michael Clarke, Director-General of the Royal United Services Institute in Britain, was one of the Anglo-Saxon military specialists who made scathing critiques of the NATO quagmire. From the US, the Atlantic Council (one of the think tanks heavily funded by Big Oil) also provided commentaries. Hence, from their own platforms there is information on the dysfunctional nature of the campaign. It is not necessary here to revisit the nature of the military campaign and elaborate on the thousands of NATO sorties in Libya over seven months. Military specialists have been able to analyse the strategic blunders and the fact that this massive NATO machine, with an unprecedented level of technology in military weapons

and equipment, was held for seven months by a small state. The full day-to-day roster of their military and naval operations to oust Gaddafi is in the public domain on the platforms of military journals. Peace activists and concerned scholars can read the daily strategic operations to learn the full weakness of NATO. Michael Clarke of RUSI argued in an article that the military operation itself created an image of 'NATO's limitations rather than its power'.¹⁷⁹ From the analysis of Vladimir Socor for the Atlantic Council and the Jamestown Foundation, there was this scathing critique:

*The coalition underestimated the resilience of Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's base of social support in the country's west. It seemed blindsided by the complexity of tribal dynamics among its suddenly acquired protégés in the country's east. In that polarized context, the allies misjudged the level of force necessary for a quick success of their intervention. This proved insufficient for short-term victory over Gaddafi, but only sufficient to shore up the rebels, thus producing a stalemate between the internal forces, and escalation of the civil war. This in turn necessitated escalation of air bombing, with further damage to infrastructure. The coalition did not adequately check the rebels before arming and funding them. Initially it portrayed the rebellion as holding democratic promise for Libya, but has toned down such claims.*¹⁸⁰

These reviews in military journals and websites underscored the operational problems of NATO in an environment where it was internationally agreed that the NATO bombing was illegal. The international peace movement organised protests and African intellectuals and activists called for an end to the bombing and for mediation by the AU. In August 2011, 200 African intellectuals released a letter opposing the 'misuse of the United Nations Security Council to engage in militarised diplomacy to effect regime change in Libya' and the 'marginalisation of the African Union'. These forces of peace called for mediation even after the Qatar ground forces entered Tripoli and claimed it had been the NTC forces.

*Nato has empowered itself openly to pursue the objective of regime change and therefore the use of force and all other means to overthrow the government of Libya, which objectives are completely at variance with the decisions of the UN Security Council.*¹⁸¹

These intellectuals were repeating the public position of the AU, but by the time the NATO and 'NTC' forces entered Tripoli it was clear that

the objective was not only regime change, but the physical elimination of Muammar Gaddafi. During the bombing campaigns, British military personnel had called for the targeted bombing and killing of Gaddafi. Robert Gates, while he was still the US Defense Secretary, called such a plan 'unwise'. Gates was not to understand that, for Big Oil and the banks, Gaddafi had to go. Hence, these forces undermined all efforts of the AU to mediate or to have another discussion of Libya in the UN Security Council.

The African Union and Libya

When the AU was formally inaugurated in Durban, South Africa, on July 8, 2002, the international relations experts were dismissive of this new international organisation. They had been taken aback by the speed with which the Constitutive Act had been drafted, debated and finally ratified. Gaddafi had been supportive of the process and the Sirte declaration of 1999 had laid the foundations for the transition from the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to the AU. The establishment of new organs, including the Peace and Security Council, the Pan African Parliament (PAP) and the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOC) had added some optimism in Africa that the AU would evolve beyond the leaders and would represent the aspirations of the people. The vision and mission of the AU continues to be an Africa integrated, prosperous and peaceful, an Africa driven by its own citizens, and a dynamic force in the global arena.

African leaders and scholars such as Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere had worked for the unity of the peoples of Africa. This AU carried with it the historic traditions of the strengths and weaknesses of the OAU processes. The major weakness of that process was that the deliberations were dominated by leaders who were themselves questionable. This weakness notwithstanding, the OAU had worked diligently to achieve the most important task of the last century: ending colonialism and apartheid. Both Julius Nyerere and Nelson Mandela had worked within the context of the negotiating mechanisms to end the genocidal politics and violence in Burundi. It was a long and drawn-out process, one which Western governments sought to undermine every step of the way.¹⁸²

The AU's diplomatic efforts

From the start of the uprisings in Libya, the AU worked hard to lay the basis for negotiations. From February 23, 2011, the Peace and Security Council of the AU met and discussed in great detail the situation in Libya. The AU was faced with an unprecedented situation, where two heads of state had been removed in the space of one month. Libya was one of the five countries that had been the anchor of the AU, along with Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria and South Africa. Between them, these five states provided around 75 per cent

of the AU's budget. Libya's Muammar Gaddafi was the most energetic of the leaders supporting the AU and many referred to him as 'brother leader'.

Very early, Gaddafi showed that he was out of step with the new realities in Tunisia and Egypt.¹⁸³ Following the threats he and his son made against the citizens of Benghazi, the Peace and Security Council of the AU worked harder to intervene to ensure that civilians were protected. By March 10, the Peace and Security Council adopted an important resolution which spelt out the roadmap to address the Libyan conflict, consistent with the obligations of the AU under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter. The roadmap included the following elements:

- immediate cessation of all hostilities;
- cooperation of the concerned Libyan authorities to facilitate the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to needy populations;
- protection of foreign nationals, including the African migrant workers living in Libya; and
- dialogue between the Libyan parties and establishment of a consensual and inclusive transitional government.

To follow up on the implementation of the AU roadmap, a high-level ad hoc committee was also established.

However, the principal media outlets of the NATO countries and the outlet of Qatar went into overdrive to savage, dismiss and marginalise the AU. When the Peace and Security Council of the AU refused to endorse the need for a no-fly zone over Libya, the Al Jazeera network was willing and able to broadcast information on the 'imminent killings of hundreds of civilians'. The BBC and CNN repeated the information on massacres in Libya, while downplaying actual killing in the streets of Bahrain.

French media and the government of France had always been uncomfortable with the existence of an independent AU. Nicholas Sarkozy called the AU to the March meeting in Paris to give its blessing to the NTC, but the leaders of the AU maintained that the matter of the rebellion in Libya had to be solved by Libyans and Africans. European and US media houses downplayed the importance of the AU and Western policy makers argued that, as Gaddafi's brainchild, the AU could not be a neutral force. But when the NATO bombing campaign began and the AU dispatched mediators to Libya, the peoples of Africa understood that the mandate of 'responsibility to protect' had been overtaken by the objective of physically eliminating Gaddafi.

On April 10-11, 2011, the ad hoc Committee of the AU, chaired by President Jacob Zuma of South Africa, undertook a visit to Libya. The mission also comprised the presidents of Congo-Brazzaville, Mali and Mauritania, and Uganda's foreign minister. The delegation landed at Tripoli's Mitiga airport after NATO gave permission for their aircraft to enter Libyan airspace – the planes were the first to land in Tripoli since the UN had imposed a no-fly zone over the country – and the NATO forces temporarily slowed the bombing while the AU team was in the capital.

In Tripoli, Gaddafi and the government of Libya confirmed to the AU delegation their acceptance of the AU Roadmap. In Benghazi, the discussions with the NTC leadership focused on the need for an urgent ceasefire. The objective was to ensure the effective protection of the civilian population and to create conducive conditions for the fulfilment of the legitimate demands of the Libyan people.

Meanwhile, France worked hard in its former colonies for these states to recognise the NTC. Senegal was the first to break the AU's united front by recognising the government of the NTC in Benghazi, more than a month before the group was recognised by the US.

The AU understood the gravity of the war in Libya, and on April 26, 2011 the Peace and Security Council, meeting at ministerial level, restated the position of the AU that the issues in Libya were political and could not be resolved by NATO bombs. In May 2011, the Assembly of the Union convened an extraordinary session. It reiterated the need for a political solution and called for an immediate end to all attacks against civilians and a ceasefire that would lead to the establishment of a consensual transitional period, culminating in elections that would enable the Libyans to freely choose their leaders. The Assembly stressed the imperative for all concerned to comply with both the letter and spirit of resolution 1973. By this time, it was clear that 'black Africans' were being targeted and executed as 'mercenaries' and the AU called on the UN Security Council to protect these Africans. In a report to the Security Council in June, Foreign Minister Hamady Ould Hamady of Mauritania, speaking on behalf of the AU High-Level ad hoc Committee on the Crisis in Libya, stated,

We are here to make a plea for an immediate humanitarian pause [in fighting] in order that the pressing needs of the populations affected can be met, a pause that should be followed by a ceasefire linked to the political process, in particular by starting with an inclusive and consensual transition.

The diplomatic efforts of the African Union were dismissed.

There had been over 600 000 foreign workers employed in the Libyan economy. By far the largest numbers of migrant workers were Africans from neighbouring countries. When the NATO bombing campaign began, most states evacuated their citizens, but the poorer states in Africa did not have the resources to evacuate their own. Many of these migrant workers were caught in the crossfire and lost their lives and livelihoods.

The AU's diplomatic efforts brought out a number of realities. The most significant was that other states, when evacuating their nationals, were leaving Africans. More than 900 Africans drowned in the Mediterranean Sea, trying to escape the fighting in Libya. In one spectacular incident, two survivors reported the tragic story of a boat carrying 72 African immigrants which ran into difficulty trying to reach the Italian port of Lampedusa. The Africans on board, including women and children, were left to drift in the Mediterranean for 16 days after a number of European military units apparently ignored their cries for help. Two of the nine survivors claimed this included a NATO ship. Despite alarms being raised with the Italian coastguard and the boat making contact with a military helicopter and a warship, no rescue effort was attempted. In fact, facing the prospect of hundreds of African migrants leaving Libya, France and Italy sought to work with other members of the EU to block their departures. As Africans drowned by the hundreds, these NATO states showed both their disregard for the International Maritime Law regarding Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and their lack of respect for African lives.

Neither NATO nor the NTC were interested in the humanity of Africans. These forces were interested in removing Gaddafi from power, and having to negotiate with the AU was seen as a minor irritation. With the clear intention of undermining the AU negotiations, on June 27, 2011 the Chief Prosecutor of the ICC issued an arrest warrant for Muammar Gaddafi, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi and Abdullah al-Senussi, 'for alleged criminal responsibility for the commission of murder and persecution as crimes against humanity from 15 February 2011 onwards. The charges related to actions of Libyan State apparatus and security forces in Tripoli, Benghazi, Misrata and elsewhere in Libya.'

A statement from African intellectuals

Some African leaders had called on Gaddafi to step aside so that the negotiations could proceed. Gaddafi accepted this proposal, and as Jean

Ping, the Chairperson of the AU, observed in his recapitulation of the engagement of the AU.¹⁸⁴ Africans had been opposed to the incessant bombing and called for a ceasefire, and now worked for the establishment of an interim government. These proposals were rejected because the NATO forces were not interested in negotiations. Hugh Roberts, formerly of the International Crisis Group, summed the position of the NATO handlers in this way:

London, Paris and Washington could not allow a ceasefire because it would have involved negotiations, first about peace lines, peacekeepers and so forth, and then about fundamental political differences. And all this would have subverted the possibility of the kind of regime change that interested the Western powers. The sight of representatives of the rebellion sitting down to talks with representatives of Gaddafi's regime, Libyans talking to Libyans, would have called the demonisation of Gaddafi into question. The moment he became once more someone people talked to and negotiated with, he would in effect have been rehabilitated. And that would have ruled out violent – revolutionary? – regime change and so denied the Western powers their chance of a major intervention in North Africa's Spring, and the whole interventionist scheme would have flopped. The logic of the demonisation of Gaddafi in late February, crowned by the referral of his alleged crimes against humanity to the International Criminal Court by resolution 1970 and then by France's decision on 10 March to recognise the NTC as the sole legitimate representative of the Libyan people, meant that Gaddafi was banished forever from the realm of international political discourse, never to be negotiated with, not even about the surrender of Tripoli when in August he offered to talk terms to spare the city further destruction, an offer once more dismissed with contempt.

This dismissal and contempt were promoted by the Western media, which had undertaken a massive psychological warfare campaign against citizens of the West in preparation for the execution of Gaddafi. In August 2011, after the NATO-led forces overran Tripoli, more than 200 African intellectuals issued an Open Letter to the Peoples of Africa and the World from Concerned Africans. The letter started by stating explicitly that 'our action to issue this letter is inspired by our desire, not to take sides, but to protect the sovereignty of Libya and the right of the Libyan people to choose their leaders and determine their own destiny. Libya is an African country'.¹⁸⁵ The letter ended in this way:

Those who have brought a deadly rain of bombs to Libya today should not delude themselves to believe that the apparent silence of the millions of Africans means that Africa approves of the campaign of death, destruction and domination which that rain represents.

We are confident that tomorrow we will emerge victorious, regardless of the death-seeking power of the most powerful armies in the world.

The answer we must provide practically, and as Africans, is – when, and in what ways, will we act resolutely and meaningfully to defend the right of the Africans of Libya to decide their future, and therefore the right and duty of all Africans to determine their destiny!

The AU Road Map remains the only way to peace for the people of Libya.

This statement from African intellectuals was one more manifestation of the residual resistance to external control that remained in Africa after decades of struggling against apartheid. It was not coincidental that the drafters of the letter had come from South Africa. It was the South African struggles that had been at the forefront of the fight against Western domination and the ideas of white supremacy. The US military and foreign policy establishment had supported white minority regimes and Henry Kissinger had famously said, in 1969, that white power was there to stay in Africa, especially Southern Africa. Through the integration of the media, financial houses, military organs and oil companies, there had been a sustained attack on Africa as the place of 'failed states'. Gaddafi and his government had been the butt of Western media stereotypes. When the NATO attack began, the Western media went into the archive of pictures and stories that demonise Gaddafi in order to carry out psychological warfare against citizens of the west, in a test of military information operation.

NATO in Libya as a Military Information Operation

From the start of its campaign in Libya, control over information was crucial to the mission of Global NATO. It was in this war that the differences between Al Jazeera, CNN, the BBC and French media subsided, and there was agreement between these news organs that they would cooperate with those who were poking the fires of war. For the few days when the top sections of the US military hesitated and there was equivocation from the White House, the corporate media vacillated. But Al Jazeera and the political establishment in the Gulf Cooperation Council understood the stakes involved in the LIA, the Arab Banking Corporation and the survival of Gaddafi.

Al Jazeera had championed the 'Arab Spring', but in the case of Libya the leaders of the Emirates were compromised by their relationship with the Intercontinental Exchange. Although Gaddafi had given the liberal reformers full room for their dalliance with the energy brokers, the continued fallout of the financial crisis in Europe and America had stimulated the Libyan leadership to be more vigilant in relation to the operations of the sovereign wealth funds. It was one thing for the liberals to consort with external bankers, but when it came to political survival, Saif al-Islam had to make a choice between his loyalty to the family and his intellectual and ideological inclinations. Once Saif al-Islam made the choice of sticking to the family, and not breaking to join his fellow 'reform-minded' colleagues such as Mahmoud Jibril, he was fair game for the Western media, dusted off the old propaganda against Gaddafi to be used for the NATO intervention.

From the time of Ronald Reagan, and even before, Gaddafi had been demonised by the Western media. In an effort to escape this demonization, Gaddafi had worked to abandon weapons of mass destruction and prevent Libya from being placed on the list of countries in the 'axis of evil'. Although the Libyan leadership worked hard to be taken off the US State Department's list of terrorist states, and despite the negotiations over the Lockerbie affair and the huge payouts, the Western media never took away the label of terrorism when discussing the regime in Libya. Although Libya

had joined the coalition of the 'Global war on Terror', Libya remained a place for the mirth and mockery of the Western media. Even after Gaddafi had been dropped from the list of leaders sponsoring terrorism, the Western media made great stories of his supposed eccentricities: his female body guards, pitching tents in foreign capitals, his voluptuous nurse, his claim to be the king of kings of Africa, etc. We know from Wikileaks that Western security agencies paid close attention to 'the eccentricities of Gaddafi'.¹⁸⁶ These eccentricities were retooled for the military information operations once the NATO intervention began. For the Western media, there was a simple change of script from writing about Gaddafi's voluptuous Ukrainian nurse to writing about mass rapes being carried out by the Gaddafi regime. These tools of information warfare proved as potent as the bombs raining down from NATO jets.

The unspoken line from Western commentators was that any information coming out of Libya and Africa was propaganda, while any news coming out of NATO was information. Throughout the war, Western news agencies downplayed the hundreds of innocent civilians who were killed by the incessant bombing for seven months. After the execution of Gaddafi and the 'installation' of the NTC government, no less a news organisation than *The New York Times* carried a lengthy rendition of the numbers of innocent civilians killed by NATO, stating that there were 'scores of civilian casualties the alliance has long refused to acknowledge or investigate'.¹⁸⁷ The journalists who produced the report on the killing of innocent civilians had this information as far back as June 2011, when the 'precision strikes' failed and were unleashing scores of civilian casualties.

This military failure of the air campaign brought back the sobering reality that 'a broad spectrum of military capabilities' are required in 'modern' warfare. Military specialists understood from the outset that air power and the assumption of air superiority would not be enough for the mission of 'regime change'. To be able to implement a 'no-fly zone', air superiority was indeed sufficient, and the NATO forces indeed had air superiority, but the ability to distinguish between friend and foe on the ground required assets that had to be put in place. These ground assets comprised regulars from Qatar and specialised forces from Britain, France and the US. In summing up the failures of the Libyan engagement, Professor Michael Clarke concluded that,

Few dispute the assertion that NATO jets enabled Libyan rebels to come knocking on Qadhafi's door in Tripoli. But as he falls, it will be difficult to avoid the

*conclusion that NATO emerges from this successful operation weaker than it went into it.*¹⁸⁸

Such a conclusion has not been part of the narrative in the mainstream media in so far as the corporate media in the West had been integrated into the US military information operations during the war in Libya. The Libyan exercise was one vivid example of the integration of the media into the military planning of Western states.

Before the start of the operation, the media was central to the preparation of the public for the planned operation. The 'reliable' information outlets, such as the BBC, CNN, Voice of America, Radio France International and Al Jazeera, carried the line that Gaddafi was a 'threat to his own people' as well as to the peace and security of Western interests. This demonization of Gaddafi was reinforced with unflattering images of the Libyan leader as a 'crazy dictator.' As one journalist summed up the interplay between information and war,

*The war on Libya has not only been a war that has vindicated NATO's (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation) claim to the most powerful military force on earth, capable of imposing its will through sheer aggression wherever it sees fit, but it has also been a war that has reasserted the Western mainstream media's power to not just fabricate events but to create.*¹⁸⁹

The ability to create events came after years of experience of packaging information for warfare in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. These forms of marketing war had emerged out of the experiences of the Cold War, when the media worked with the military industrial complex to sell war and militarism to US citizens. This was achieved through the strategy of 'threat inflation' which was employed to scare the Western World into the Cold War. Frank Kofsky, in the book *Harry S. Truman and the War Scare of 1948*, exposed the arrival of the war scare and the psychological warfare against US citizens that their way of life was threatened by communism. President Dwight Eisenhower had sought to damp down this war scare by warning of the dangers of the military industrial complex, but his warnings were overshadowed by the intensity of the disinformation and psychological warfare against US citizens.

Sophisticated media campaigns to market and propagate warfare did not end with the Cold War. In fact, with the advent of the War on Terror they gave way to more sophisticated mechanisms, which Donald Rumsfeld,

former US Secretary of Defense, called 'military information operations'. Under his tenure, the Pentagon had rolled out a comprehensive information onslaught which had come under the rubric of Total Information Awareness (TIA). Under George W. Bush, Donald Rumsfeld and Dick Cheney, the US establishment rolled out this TIA programme to take disinformation and psychological warfare to an entirely new level. According to *The New York Times*, the TIA programme sought to 'revolutionize the ability of the US to detect, classify and identify foreign terrorists' by developing data mining and profiling technologies that could analyse commercial transactions and private communications.

*Total Information Awareness of transnational threats requires keeping track of individuals and understanding how they fit into models. To this end, T.I.A. seeks to develop architectures for integrating existing databases into a 'virtual, centralized, grand database.' In addition to analyzing financial, educational, travel and medical records, as well as criminal and other governmental records, the T.I.A. program could include the development of technologies to create risk profiles for millions of visitors and American citizens in its quest for suspicious patterns of behavior.*¹⁹⁰

The intrusiveness of this data mining mechanism had been so extensive that there was an outcry from liberals and the Pentagon dropped the label of Total Information Awareness – only to roll out an Information Operations Roadmap in 2003. Under this banner of Information Operations, the Army defined information operations to include psychological operations, deception, protecting vital data, electronic warfare, and computer network defence and attack. This repackaged TIA outlook was written to provide the US Department of Defense with 'a plan to advance the goal of information operations as a core military competency.'¹⁹¹ The Information Operations Roadmap elevated information operations to the same level as other military armed fighting capabilities, and one of its stated benefits is 'adversary behavior modification.'¹⁹² In the document, Donald Rumsfeld notes that 'the recommendations in the Information Operations Roadmap begin the process of developing IO into warfighting capability that will enable Combatant Commanders to target adversary decision-making while protecting our own.'¹⁹³

What Rumsfeld did not make explicit here was that the US also deployed information or tools of psychological warfare against its own citizens, controlling their decision-making with the goal of gaining uninhibited

support for the prosecution of wars around the globe. Russ Hoyle's Book *Going To War: How Misinformation, Disinformation, and Arrogance Led America into Iraq* gave extensive details on the role of military information in the Iraq War.¹⁹⁴

To be able to carry out a meaningful psychological warfare campaign in Africa, the intellectual infrastructure had to rise above the mediocrity of the Africanist establishment. This establishment had no credibility because the ideas of white supremacy had led the US to be on the side of those who assassinated Patrice Lumumba and designated Nelson Mandela a terrorist. Conscious of this historic limitation, the Pentagon embarked on a special information programme for Africa called 'Operation Objective Voice'. This plan was supplemented by a Special Social Science research network to improve the efficiency of the Pentagon and the US armed forces in Africa.

The psychological warfare and baggage of colonial history weakened the US military, and this weakness was compounded by the intellectual impoverishment of the private military contractors who saw war in Africa as a new gravy train. Hence, while the US could carry out psychological warfare and disinformation against its own citizens, it could only do this on a limited scale in Africa. For example, African workers returning to their respective countries gave a different picture of what was happening from what was being reported in European and US news outlets. Newspapers in Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe and South Africa carried detailed comments opposing the NATO war in Libya.

The opposition from African opinion makers takes us back to the information manipulation that preceded the US invasion of Iraq and the deployment of top military experts on psychological operations (psy-ops) to employ psychological mind control in manipulating some senators to support increased/sustained Congressional funding for the War in Afghanistan.¹⁹⁵ After this psy-ops operation against Senators, the top members of the Senate Armed Services Committee called for a federal audit of the Pentagon's 'military information support operations' in light of concerns about their 'growing cost and questionable merit.' In February 2012, the newspaper *USA Today* reported that spending on information operations had peaked at US\$580 million in 2009, mostly for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

During the year of the war against Libya, the Pentagon spent US\$355 million on military information operations. We can now assess the role of these operations in the battles for Tripoli.

Disinformation and Operation Dawn Mermaid: When is a war not a war?

We now know from the strategic analyses and press reports that 'Operation Dawn Mermaid', the code name for the secret plan to take Tripoli, had been hatched in the Tunisian city of Djerba in late April 2011, when the NATO leaders realised that the bombing alone would not dislodge the Gaddafi regime.¹⁹⁶ The plans for the military takeover of Tripoli had been discussed in Paris with Nicolas Sarkozy while NATO was intensifying the bombings.

From the same reports on Operation Dawn Mermaid we also know that special forces from France, Britain and Qatar had been deployed after the UN resolution. According to *The New York Times*, 'the United States provided intelligence, refueling and more precision bombing than Paris or London want to acknowledge. Inevitably, then, NATO air power and technology, combined with British, French and Qatari "trainers" working "secretly" with the rebels on the ground, have defeated the forces of Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi'. Reuters news agency, which had written about the plan to take Tripoli, reported that 'former soldiers from an elite British commando unit, the Special Air Service, and other private contractors from Western countries were on the ground in the Libyan city of Misrata'.¹⁹⁷ In the same report, it indicated that, according to *The Guardian*, private military contractors were 'helping NATO identify possible targets in the heavily contested city and passing this information, as well as information about the movements of Gaddafi's forces, to a NATO command centre in Naples, Italy. The newspaper reported that a group of six armed Westerners had been filmed by the Al Jazeera TV network talking to rebels in Misrata; the men fled after realising they were being filmed'.

The importance of these special forces was magnified in the wake of the counter offensive against the ground forces that were being supported from the air. While this information on the special forces was discussed in military journals and think tanks, for the broader US public this information had to be kept out of the news because the Obama administration had handed over the operation to NATO and claimed before the Houses of Congress that 'there were no boots on the ground' in Libya. This idea of boots on the ground referred to US military personnel engaged in direct combat roles in Libya, but it conjured up old images of previous wars in Vietnam and Iraq and did not grasp the realities of the new forms of warfare that depended on drones, special forces, intelligence assets and private military contractors working with regional militias. In March, President

Obama had directed the CIA to deploy 'assets' to carry out a 'finding' on the nature of the NTC. Western newspapers carried reports of the coordination between the 'rebels' and US and British intelligence operatives on the ground: 'C.I.A. Agents in Libya Aid Airstrikes and Meet Rebels'.¹⁹⁸

What these news reports sought to do was to keep out of the news the role of the elements in the NTC that Vijay Prashad called America's Libyans. These were the 'reformers', along with Khalifa Belqasim Hifter, the military commander who returned to Libya from Virginia, US to take charge of the military wing of the uprisings. One newspaper columnist called Hifter the 'CIA person'.¹⁹⁹ After spending twenty years in Virginia, waiting for the moment to be recalled by those who had worked inside and outside for the overthrow of Gaddafi, Hifter competed for the leadership of the military wing of the rebellion with General Abdel Fatah Younis, who had been Gaddafi's interior minister until the rebellion broke out in Benghazi. Younis had been the former head of Libya's Special Forces and had defected to the Benghazi elements at the beginning of the uprising. In the first weeks of the uprising, when the US Africa Command was claiming leadership of this NATO intervention, there had been intense rivalry between Younis and Hifter, with differing claims as to who was the leader of the armed wing.

In the middle of this wrangle, the Gaddafi government was able to recover its nerve sufficiently to launch a counteroffensive. According to a Royal United Services Institute report, 'At the end of March, Gaddafi regime forces launched a counteroffensive on the eastern front. The rebels retreated in disarray from Bin Jawwad within a hundred miles of Sirte all the way to Ajdabiya, the same distance from Benghazi'.²⁰⁰ It was after this counteroffensive that the media war intensified.

The retreat of the rebel forces, two weeks after the start of the bombing, was never in the broader public domain because for most of March and April, after their deployment in Libya, the NATO forces depended on the media to disorient the Libyans while providing false information about what was going on. As the rebels 'retreated in disarray' before Gaddafi's counteroffensive, William Hague, the British Foreign Minister, stated that Gaddafi had fled to Venezuela.²⁰¹ This was a blatant lie and the best example of the disinformation campaign that was being waged. Other examples abound, such as journalists who were inside Libya bringing to the attention of the world the use of fake footage from a demonstration in India claiming it was in Tripoli's Green Square, as part of their evidence that the city had fallen.²⁰² These examples are only small snippets of the role of disinformation in diverting attention from the planning of Operation

Dawn Mermaid. After the start of the air campaign, at the end of March 2011, NATO airstrikes continued to pound Libyan military positions and units, while the ground war between Gaddafi's forces and the rebels took on a see-saw effect.

For citizens in Western Europe and North America, the media claimed that the Gaddafi regime would fall in a matter of weeks. Groups usually associated with the peace movements in Europe were particularly susceptible to this disinformation campaign that Europe was fighting for democracy and human rights in Libya. The entire spectrum of what could be called the European left – social democrats, former communists, socialists and environmentalists – bought into the narrative and gave political support to their governments. In Germany, although the government had withdrawn from the military campaign, the left continued to support this NATO operation.

The disinformation campaign against Western citizens took on greater urgency after the Congressional Hearings on March 31, 2011. There, the first rumblings were heard from members of the US Congress that if the Libyan intervention were to continue beyond a few weeks, then the President had to obtain permission through the War Powers Act. Speaking on the House Floor on March 31, Congressman Dennis Kucinich said that Obama had already violated the War Powers Act with his initial bombings of Libya:

*The Congress through the War Powers Act provided the executive with an exception to unilaterally respond only when the nation was in actual or imminent danger: to 'repel sudden attacks.' Today we are in a constitutional crisis because our chief executive has assumed for himself powers to wage war which are neither expressly defined nor implicit in the Constitution, nor permitted under the War Powers Act.*²⁰³

The War Powers Resolution (often referred to as the War Powers Act), passed in 1973 at the height of the Vietnam War, constrains the Executive from going to war without authorisation from the US Congress. The Act states that the powers of the President, as Commander in Chief, to introduce US forces into hostilities, or imminent hostilities, can only be exercised pursuant to:

1. A declaration of war;
2. Specific statutory authorisation; or
3. A national emergency created by an attack on the US or its forces.

Under the War Powers Resolution, a president can initiate military action but must receive approval from Congress to continue the operation within 60 days. If approval is not granted and the president deems it an emergency, then an additional 30 days are granted for ending operations.

Challenges to the legality of the military campaign against Libya mounted as the progressive African-American community, some academics, peace activists and politicians from both parties participated in an outcry on whether the war in Libya met the criteria of a national emergency for the peoples of the US. A Hearing had been called on the same day by the House Foreign Relations Committee on Libya Defining US National Security Interests. James Steinberg, the Deputy Secretary of State, testified before the Committee, but the statements from members of the House were overwhelmingly opposed to the actions of the President without authorisation from Congress. It was the full-throated opposition from representatives from the Congress that forced the administration and NATO to keep the real activities out of the news. Congressman Ron Paul, the notoriously conservative anti-war libertarian, said,

Once again the American people are being suckered into one more war; illegal, unconstitutional and undeclared. We have been doing this since World War II and they have not been good for this country, and they have not been good for the world. This is said to be a war that is to prevent something. It is a preventative war. They say there is going to be a slaughter, but there has so far not been a slaughter. In checking the records the best I can, I have seen no pictures of any slaughter. But already it is reported now that our bombs have killed more than 40 civilians. So how can you save a country by killing civilians? This is a bad war. We got into it incorrectly. It will not help us. And unfortunately, I do not see that this administration or any administration is going to move back from this until we become totally bankrupt. It is very necessary for us to assess this properly. And the way we go to war is very important. Just not get token permission, we should never go to war without a full declaration and it should be strongly bipartisan.²⁰⁴

While Paul's anti-war and anti-militaristic position was known, it was the opposition from Republicans that brought out the unpopularity of the US engagement in Libya. Congressman Mike Pence, a conservative Republican from Indiana, and Congressman Jeff Duncan made scathing statements about the hypocrisy of the Libyan intervention, demanding that the cover of humanitarianism be lifted. When the bombs started raining down on

Libya, the Obama administration had claimed that actions in Libya were not subject to the War Powers Resolution because they did not meet the definition of 'hostilities.'

By the end of May, after the 60-day period, there was anxiety because the expected victory in weeks did not take place. As these debates were going on, Obama was focused on the question of Osama Bin Laden and the best way forward. The Security establishment had known for years that Bin Laden was in Pakistan and the Obama White House decided to take action. After the physical elimination of Bin Laden in Pakistan, the Administration could no longer put off Congress on the Libyan question and in June sent a 32 page report to Congress stating that, 'U.S. military operations are distinct from the kind of 'hostilities' contemplated by the Resolution's 60-day termination provision'. The report continued, 'U.S. operations do not involve sustained fighting or active exchanges of fire with hostile forces, nor do they involve the presence of U.S. ground troops, U.S. casualties or a serious threat thereof, or any significant chance of escalation into a conflict characterized by those factors'. The report also argued that NATO was leading the efforts in Libya and that US strikes relied on remotely piloted drone planes.

This claim was a major failure on the part of the military/political establishment to legitimise its actions. The peace movement in the US was opposed to war against Libya. In the African-American community, leaders as diverse as Jesse Jackson, Minister Louis Farrakhan and former Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney vociferously opposed this attack on Libya. In response to this mounting opposition in the US, and as the factional struggles inside the NTC intensified, Nicholas Sarkozy took over the leadership in the coordination of Operation Dawn Mermaid.

Four months after the start of the NATO intervention, the Gaddafi regime had not fallen. As several towns and positions changed hands, strategic commentaries saw the war grinding into a stalemate – with Gaddafi's forces controlling most of Western Libya and the rebels most of the East. In the midst of this stalemate, the British media began to complain about the need for real time information on the ground and strengthening intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance missions (ISTAR). In the last week of April, the US announced the introduction of its unmanned Predator drones to the war.

On April 30, 2011, the Libyan government announced that a NATO airstrike had killed Gaddafi's youngest son, Saif al-Arab Gaddafi, aged 29, and three of Gaddafi's grandchildren. Although there was jubilation in

Benghazi, the failure to kill Gaddafi brought the debate about his execution out into the open. This attack on Gaddafi's family backfired and intensified opposition to the NATO intervention across Africa and the Middle East. Then Secretary General of the Arab League, Amr Moussa, said, 'What is happening in Libya differs from the aim of imposing a no-fly zone, and what we want is the protection of civilians and not the bombardment of more civilians.' This attempt to assassinate Gaddafi brought out sharp differences between the civilian and military leadership in both Britain and the US. The British Chief of the Defence Staff, Gen. Sir David Richards, openly contradicted William Hague, the Foreign Secretary, stating that Gaddafi was not a target.²⁰⁵ (William Hague and Liam Fox, the Defence Secretary had agreed that Gaddafi was a target.) Robert Gates in the US sided with Sir David Richards, but by October the elements in the Western financial circles who wanted Gaddafi dead had gained the ascendancy. Qatar, the base of the link between the oil giants and the financial wizards, was outside the arena where public pressure could constrain the actions of the government.

From the start of the military operations, the NATO alliance had been caught in a real quagmire in Libya. States that were supposed to be fighting Al Qaeda joined up with forces in Libya which had in the past been incarcerated in Guantanamo. While NATO was carrying out 150 missions per day – bombing and killing innocent civilians – the infighting and intrigues in Benghazi over the lines of authority over the varying militias were undermining the legitimacy of the NTC. In the international media, the question was persistently asked, 'What is the NTC?' In the midst of this infighting, General Abdel Fatah Younis, the military leader of the rebellion, was arrested, shot and killed on July 28, 2011. Less than two weeks later, NTC President Mustafa Abdul Jalil ordered the dismissal of the NTC's executive committee. Mahmoud Jibril, the top leader of the NTC – who had been in on the planning of Operation Dawn Mermaid – was kept on to form the next cabinet. In the wake of the killing of Gen. Younis, the NATO forces decided that the planned 'uprising' in Tripoli had to go forward.

Who Took Tripoli?

The infighting and intrigue among the differing militias had compounded the weaknesses of NATO in Libya. Despite the coordination with the special forces, the rivalries between the militias ensured that there could be no effective planning between them. NATO had been bombing Libya for nearly five months and the demands for ending the bombing had been growing louder. Opinion inside Africa for a negotiated settlement intensified, with African writers calling for the AU road map to be the basis for negotiations. The UN mandate for 'the responsibility to protect' ran only until the end of September. Russia was calling for the reconvening of the Security Council to discuss the mandate of the no-fly zone. With the cooperation between Russia, China and South Africa in the Security Council, there was no guarantee that there would be an agreement on an extension of the UN Security Council mandate. For the Obama administration, the 60-day period allowing the President to engage in 'hostilities' without authorisation from Congress was over. These external and internal factors impelled the orchestrators of Operation Dawn Mermaid to plan the seizure of Tripoli for August 10. However, the work to place the foreign troops and special forces in Tripoli had not been completed.

Since the April meeting held in Tunisia to organise the Tripoli 'uprising', NATO had been working with the Gulf states to ferry troops and equipment to Libya. We know from a detailed Reuters report that this process took months, and that the battle for Misrata was a crucial aspect of the ability of Qatar to land equipment and personnel. In an interim report entitled 'Accidental Heroes', the Royal United Services Institute acknowledged the role of foreign troops in the assault on Tripoli:

It is notable that, from April, the UAE established a Special Forces presence in the Zawiyah District and started to supply rebel forces in that area with equipment and provisions by air. Qatar also assumed a very large role; it established training facilities in both Benghazi and, particularly, the Nafusa Mountains in May 9 and acted as a supply route and conduit for French weapons and ammunition supplies to the rebels (notably in June), including by establishing an air strip at Zintan.²⁰⁶

European newspapers reported later that Qatar had fielded more than 5 000 troops to Libya to remove Gaddafi.²⁰⁷ The British military commentary on the seizure of Tripoli also argued that this confidence in Qatar had been built up in Afghanistan:

*Western special forces could have confidence in the training roles undertaken by Qatar and the UAE, because the Special Forces in those countries have in turn been trained by the UK and France over many years. Furthermore, Jordanian and UAE special forces have increased their operational experience through long term deployments in Afghanistan.*²⁰⁸

What was missing from the Western military analysis of who took Tripoli was the role played by Western media and Al Jazeera in the war propaganda campaign that fabricated false studio images of the entry of the ‘rebels’ in Tripoli. Lizzie Phelan, a British journalist on the ground, gave many examples of the confusion wrought by Al Jazeera on what was happening in the Tripoli ‘uprising’. It is from the reports of journalists on the ground, as well as from following the day-by-day accounts, that one can reconstruct the different elements that constituted Operation Dawn Mermaid.

The reconstruction of NATO’s triple assault – by air, land and sea – to capture Tripoli was followed by military experts all over the world.²⁰⁹ Operation Dawn Mermaid was initially meant to begin on August 10, but the Qatari troops, disguised as ‘rebels’, had not yet been in place in Zawiyah, Zintan and Ghanyan. In Washington, new demands for ‘boots on the ground’ were made when the security establishment grasped the fact that the August 10 date for the capture of Tripoli was approaching without the necessary forces and equipment in place. The desperation within the foreign policy establishment was quite explicit when one commentator from the conservative Jamestown Foundation, in Washington, D.C., produced a report on August 9 stating that, to avoid a worst-case scenario, ‘the coalition can continue the war of attrition for a long time to come, eroding Gaddafi’s forces but also the coalition’s own reputation at the same time. It can also resort to an abrupt escalation of air strikes.’²¹⁰

The intensified bombing in the two-week period before August 19 contributed to hundreds of civilian deaths. Human Rights Watch, in its report *Unacknowledged Deaths: Civilian Casualties in NATO’s Air Campaign in Libya*, revealed the number of civilian casualties in this war.²¹¹ This 82-page report, issued after NATO declared victory, reinforced the argument

that it was innocent civilians who perished in this regime change operation that had been billed as 'responsibility to protect.' In this 'War of Contradictions', NATO was compounding the failure to protect civilians by killing them. The entire propaganda for the West had been based on the idea of protecting civilians, but after the pitched battles it was clear that the NATO operation was not for a no-fly zone, but for regime change.

The Western fear of a diplomatic breakthrough intensified when the AU announced that Gaddafi was willing to step aside in order to facilitate negotiations. The indictment of Gaddafi and his son by the ICC in June was one more act to bar a negotiated settlement.²¹² What was kept out of the international news was the contradiction of labelling Gaddafi a criminal before the international community while turning to another indicted leader, Omar Bashir of Sudan, to support the regime change option. Bashir had his own grievance against Gaddafi because Khalil Ibrahim, from the Darfur region of Sudan, had taken refuge in Libya. Contradictions grew as the Sudanese intelligence services cooperated with the NATO and Gulf Cooperation Council in Libya.

From the Human Rights Watch *Unacknowledged Deaths* report, it is possible to grasp the escalation of air strikes and the push for the NATO forces to capture Tripoli. In order to prepare for the assault on the capital there had been intensified air strikes – particularly in the period August 16-18 – in the zones immediately east of Tripoli. In order to tip the balance on the side of the special forces and the private contractors, the Pentagon sent extra Predator drones to Libya. 'It was a controversial issue even as to whether it made sense to pull (drones) from other places to boost this up to try to bring this to a quicker conclusion. Those who backed the use of extra drones won, and the last two Predators were taken from a training base in the US and sent to north Africa, arriving on August 16.' By this time, elements in the US foreign policy establishment such as Richard Haass, of the Council for Foreign Relations, had been won over to the side calling for intensified US military involvement on the ground.

With the intensified air strikes and coordination, NATO deemed August 19 to August 20 to be the right moment to capture Tripoli. The signal for the NATO-supported 'rebels' to 'rise up' to take Tripoli was given by the Chairman of the NTC:

The signal to attack came soon after sunset on August 20, in a speech by NTC Chairman Mustafa Abdel Jalil. 'The noose is tightening,' he said. A 'veritable bloodbath' was about to occur. Within 10 minutes of his speech, rebel cells in

*neighborhoods across Tripoli started moving. Some units were directly linked to the operation; many others were not but had learned about the plan.*²¹³

Western newspapers then took up the most important aspect of the military information operations: the disinformation to confuse the citizens of Tripoli. Nicholas Pelham, from *The New York Times*, gave one account of the coordination in the *New York Review of Books*:

*On Saturday, August 20, as dusk descended and the mosques sounded the prayer call for breakfast, Mustafa Abdel Jalil, Qaddafi's meek-seeming former justice minister who now heads the NTC, went on television to deliver an address. Before he had finished, the rebel flag was flying over Suq al-Juma and other Tripoli neighborhoods. Meanwhile, NATO forces intensified their bombardment of loyalist positions on the Western outskirts of Tripoli, stretching to its limits their UN mandate to protect civilians. As the colonel's forces abandoned their bases, they found themselves sandwiched between rebels sweeping in from the mountains and Tripolitans carving out their own enclaves. Challenged on multiple fronts, Qaddafi's forces melted away.*²¹⁴

On August 20, the world was told that there was an uprising in Tripoli and that the overthrow of the regime was imminent. However, journalists on the ground gave a different account of the confusion in Tripoli between August 20 and August 24. Lizzie Phelan reported that,

*On the first day after rebels from sleeper cells inside Tripoli emerged and began attacking checkpoints manned by Libyan Special Forces. As is the pattern with their advance into areas on the way to the capital, they faced a swift initial defeat. But with the first images emerging around the world of the rebels inside Tripoli, NATO ensured it would not be short lived. The organisation sanctioned to 'protect civilians' rapidly moved to bomb all checkpoints in the densely packed city. The vast majority of these were manned by volunteers – i.e., ordinary citizens that had been armed with Kalashnikovs since the beginning of the crisis – so that the rebels could easily move into the city by sea and by road. This was followed by masses of youth and other residents in the capital pouring into the streets to defend their city, as they had pledged to do during the mass rallies mentioned above and elsewhere.*²¹⁵

Faced with the spontaneous resistance of urban dwellers who resisted foreign occupation, NATO intensified the bombing of checkpoints held

by urban residents. By this time, there were enough special forces on the ground to assist the NATO bombers in the precision bombing that the military analysts liked to boast about. Given the importance of the control of information, NATO bombed the main broadcasting station in Tripoli. Nationalist sentiment among the urban population was captured by Hala Misrati, the female presenter on the state-run TV, who waved a gun and said that she was ready to die for her country. (It was significant that the presenter did not say she was willing to die for Gaddafi.)

On Sunday, August 21, while the NATO forces were moving to capture the media outlets controlled by the Gaddafi regime, the international media, along with the psychological operations section of the war, added to the confusion about what was going on in Tripoli by announcing that Gaddafi's sons had been captured and that Gaddafi and other family members had fled the country. Late the following evening, Saif al-Islam turned up at the Rixos, the Tripoli hotel where foreign reporters were staying, to say, 'I am here to disperse the rumors'.

The appearance of Saif al-Islam and reports that Gaddafi had been driving around the city rallying supporters led NATO to intensify the bombing, which now concentrated on the supporters of the Libyan government at Gaddafi's compound of Bab al-Azizia. From Phelan, we learnt that government supporters were bombed 63 times in one day:

Following relentless bombardment, the masses were pushed back to Gaddafi's compound Bab al-Azizia where they resisted the rebels' advance for a further 24 hours. It was during this time that Saif al-Islam, who until then the media and International Criminal Court had been insisting was captured and arrested, showed up at the Rixos hotel where we were trapped. Calm and confident, he took out a group of journalists to Bab al-Azizia whereupon their return they confirmed seeing thousands in and around the compound waving the green flag, including as the tribes had pledged, from their people across the country. But like the peaceful march in the Western mountains on 24 July, which was attacked by NATO and the rebels, the masses in Bab al-Azizia were broken up by NATO bombing an entrance for the rebels and attacks by Apache gunships. The same fate was visited upon gatherings in Green Square. Bab al-Azizia alone was reported to have been bombed 63 times during that time.²¹⁶

The fighting for Tripoli went on for at least three days following the intense bombing. When the state-run television station, the Bab al-Azizia compound and the Green Square were captured, the NATO forces declared

victory. Even while fighting was continuing, President Obama broke his vacation in Martha's Vineyard to declare that 'The Gaddafi regime is coming to an end, and the future of Libya is in the hands of its people.'

Which people he referred to was not clear. Also unclear was the cost to citizens who had not supported NATO and the Islamist forces that were active in the capture of Tripoli. By the end of August, Gaddafi's wife and children crossed the border to Algeria. Between August 20 and October 20 the focus of the war turned to the capture of Gaddafi. Before we turn to those events, it is important to highlight the atrocities that were carried out by the 'rebels', with particular reference to the destruction and dispersal of the people of Tawergha.

Tawergha and the Myth of 'African Mercenaries'

The fighting in Tripoli went from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, with NATO planes and apache helicopters supporting the ground forces that were in the process of 'seizing the city'. Once the Western media focused on the Libyan leadership that led the assault on Green Square and on the Gaddafi compound, the leader who emerged as head of the Tripoli Military Council was Abdelhakim Belhadj (or Abdul Hakim Belhadj). Here was another contradiction for states that had been fighting Jihadists.

Belhadj had been a military commander of the LIFG who received his first military training from the US-supported elements who were fighting against the Soviet occupation in Afghanistan. After his service in Afghanistan, Belhadj was arrested in Malaysia and rendered to Libya by the CIA. (He has recently filed a law suit against the British for complicity in torture he sustained following his rendition.) Belhadj had long been associated with the opposition to Gaddafi and the LIFG's abortive armed struggle in the Benghazi region. As Martinez explained in the book *Libyan Paradox*, 'between 1995 and 1998, the LIFG carried out guerrilla operations against the security forces in the Benghazi region, prompting a military response on the part of the regime in the form of bombing raids on the mountainous regions of Jebel al Akhadar where the militants had their hideouts.'²¹⁷

What the LIFG was unable to accomplish on its own against Gaddafi in 1990s, it did with NATO's assistance in 2011. The 'victory' of the forces that comprised the Tripoli Military Council came at a very high price for hundreds of thousands of Libyans. This is because the nature of the fighting pitched neighbours against neighbours when the Libyan armed forces of Gaddafi collapsed, early in the 'rebellion.'

The Libyan armed forces had been degraded under Gaddafi because the regime feared a *coup d'état*. This fear intensified after the rebellion broke out and officers such as Younis defected. Western reports on the divisions in the army have outlined the depth of the infiltration of the Libyan establishment after years of seeking reconciliation with Western states. Saif al-Islam had

developed deep relations with the intellectual frontpersons for imperialism and Muammar Gaddafi had enabled the imperial intervention by his close collaboration with their intelligence agencies.

During the initial stages of the integrated Qatar/special forces/private military contractors assault on Tripoli, the spokesperson for Gaddafi boasted that the regime had 65 000 armed personnel ready to defend Tripoli. Yet, when the special forces of NATO and Qatar entered the capital, with Belhadj as the Head of the Tripoli Military Council, the 65 000 forces who were supposed to defend Tripoli were nowhere to be seen. It devolved upon the citizens opposed to NATO to defend their communities.

The mythical 65 000 personnel had been superseded by militias under Gaddafi's sons. These 'paramilitary' forces under Gaddafi were better at internal repression than dealing with foreign threats. From the annual studies of the International Institute of Strategic Studies and from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, it was possible to obtain detailed information on military expenditures under Gaddafi. According to these sources, there were supposed to be over 120 000 persons under arms in Libya by January 2011: Army, 45,000; paramilitary, 40,000; Air Force, 8,000; Air Defence, 15,000; and Navy, 8,000.²¹⁸ Undoubtedly, the Libyan armed forces were no match for the sophisticated weaponry of Britain, Canada, France, the US and other forces of NATO, but the Vietnamese had shown that political mobilisation and organisation of citizens to defend their society could neutralise superior weaponry. Gaddafi did not learn this elementary lesson.

Although the Libyan armed forces were composed of a number of paramilitary forces and security services, these armed elements acted as a means of controlling the power of the regular military and providing Gaddafi and his family with security. The narrative of 'tribal' loyalties ensured that the military units around Sirte, the birthplace of Gaddafi, were the best equipped and the most loyal. Libya had billions of dollars, but Gaddafi did not know how to buy and maintain weapons, or how to spend money in uplifting the technical and intellectual level of the army. Saif al-Islam, in dabbling with Islam and neo-liberalism, only served to confuse the soldiers as to where they should stand. Thus, when a real war emerged, Gaddafi, who had been spending about a billion dollars per year on weapons, was full of bluster but had no real army.

Western military analysts had studied Gaddafi very closely and had told anyone who wanted to know that between 1970 and 2009, the Gaddafi regime had spent more than US\$30 billion. 'Libya had to keep many of its

aircraft and over 1 000 of its tanks in storage. Its other army equipment purchases require far more manpower than its small active army and low quality reserves can provide. Its overall ratio of weapons to manpower is absurd, and Libya has compounded its problems by buying a wide diversity of equipment types that make it all but impossible to create an effective training and support base.' The military analysts who were writing on the absurdity of Gaddafi's military planning and arms purchases came from the same countries that were competing to sell him new weapons. When Gaddafi had visited France in 2007, the regime had ordered billions of dollars for military 'modernisation.' The US had been eager to get into this sale of weaponry, and when the rebellion broke out the US military had been trying to convince the US Congress that it should be given permission to sell weapons to Libya.

The military modernisation did not protect the Libyan citizens: when the NATO bombings began, ordinary Libyans got caught between the different factions and militias fighting to take power. In this fight, the people who suffered the most were the dark skinned Libyans and African migrant workers who were dubbed 'Gaddafi's African mercenaries'. This narrative of African mercenaries became pervasive after the battles for Misrata.

After the NATO forces had decimated the ordinance and anti-aircraft assets of the Gaddafi regime, the battles for control of cities took on vicious proportions, with young fighters driving on the back of converted fighting vehicles known as 'technicals'. Among these battles the fight for the control of Misrata was one of the biggest, and the most decisive in the war. Before the forces of NATO and Qatar seized the airport at Misrata, towards the end of April, the city was the site of one of the most intense struggles. It was in the midst of the struggle for Misrata that the military information structures declared that Misrata was under siege from African mercenaries. Libyan citizens from the surrounding towns that opposed the 'rebels' were marked for revenge during the months of siege. Tawergha was one of those towns – during the fighting, the 'rebels' would put black skinned African residents on international TV, claiming them as examples of the African mercenaries fighting for Gaddafi.

It is estimated that over one million African migrant workers had flocked to Libya to find work, and many of these were now caught in the anti-African hysteria. However, the Libyans who felt the brunt of the retaliation of the militias from Misrata were the residents of neighbouring Tawergha, the majority of whose residents were dark skinned Libyans. The AU intensified its diplomatic actions when the news began to be reported

internationally of the racist attacks against Black Africans. Jean Ping, chairperson of the Commission of the AU, decried the attacks on black Africans and reiterated the reasons why the AU wanted to see an inclusive government in Libya. 'Blacks are being killed', Ping declared. 'Blacks are having their throats slit. Blacks are accused of being mercenaries. Do you think it's normal in a country that's a third black that blacks are confused with mercenaries? There are mercenaries in Libya, many of them are black, but there are not only blacks and not all blacks there are mercenaries. Sometimes, when they are white, they call them "technical advisors."'

This reminder that Libya is in Africa and that a third of the country is black was for those forces who were celebrating the success of a NATO mission to protect Africans which had ended up killing Africans. In a lengthy report for *Monthly Review*, Maximilian Forte provided a detailed assessment of how Al Jazeera engineered this myth of African mercenaries.²¹⁹ Forte and Lizzie Phelan grasped the information warfare that was going on in labelling Africans as mercenaries when the Libyan people resisted NATO. Forte later developed a lengthy analysis of the myths associated with the ouster of Gaddafi. One of these myths was that of the African mercenaries. Forte noted:

*Black prisoners were put on display for the media (which is a violation of the Geneva Convention), but Amnesty International later found that all the prisoners had supposedly been released since none of them were fighters, but rather were undocumented workers from Mali, Chad, and west Africa. The myth was useful for the opposition to insist that this was a war between 'Gaddafi and the Libyan people,' as if he had no domestic support at all – an absolute and colossal fabrication such that one would think only little children could believe a story so fantastic. The myth is also useful for cementing the intended rupture between 'the new Libya' and Pan-Africanism, realigning Libya with Europe and the 'modern world' which some of the opposition so explicitly crave.*²²⁰

After the NATO forces installed Belhadj as the head of the Tripoli Military Council, the robbing, killing and abduction of black residents in Libya reached the point where Tawergha became a ghost town. This Council did not have authority beyond the confines of the protected bases in Tripoli, and the Misrata militias took the law into their own hands to wreak revenge upon the citizens of Tawergha for their supposed role in the three-month siege of Misrata. The 35 000 residents of Tawergha were driven out of their

homes. In December, a BBC reporter visited the bombed remnants of what had been a town and reported,

As you enter Tawergha from the main road, the name is erased from the road sign. It is now eerily silent but for the incongruously beautiful bird song. There were a few cats skulking about, and one skeletal, limping dog. Building after building is burnt and ransacked. The possessions of the people who lived here are scattered about, suggesting desperate flight. In places, the green flags of the former regime still flutter from some of the houses. Buildings show the scars of heavy bombardment, some are burnt out shells, some are just abandoned. The town is empty of humans, apart from a small number of Misratan militiamen preventing the return of the town's residents.²²¹

A Commission of Inquiry on Libya appointed by the UN Human Rights Council concluded in March 2012 that Misrata militias had committed crimes against humanity of torture and killings of Tawerghans. 'The Misrata thuwar [anti-Gaddafi forces] have killed, arbitrarily arrested and tortured Tawerghans across Libya'. When Africans attempted to focus attention on the rape and wanton murder of hundreds of black Libyans,²²² the world was not paying attention because the international media was fixated on the search for Gaddafi, who had escaped when the NATO-backed Tripoli Military Council took over the buildings in Tripoli.

After the ethnic cleansing of Tawergha, the NATO bombs turned to the region of Sirte, the home of Gaddafi. Sirte had another importance for Africa – it was the scene of the declaration of 1999 that gave birth to the Constitutive Act of the AU. This historic site was bombed to smithereens after August 20. While NATO bombed, NTC militias and international special agents moved to control surrounding communities in order to wipe out the last major pocket of resistance to regime change. According to NATO's own figures, the bombing of Sirte resulted in 427 'key hits' from August 25 to September 29. By the end of October, all of the major buildings in Sirte had been destroyed. With bombs dropping from the sky and NTC militias shelling the city with everything they have at their disposal – tanks, artillery and Grad rockets – thousands were killed in Sirte. But the real target was Gaddafi, who had made his way out of Tripoli to Sirte.

The Execution of Gaddafi

Gaddafi's escape from Tripoli

The details of the escape of Colonel Gaddafi from Tripoli and the bombing of the convoy ferrying Gaddafi from Sirte have been provided for posterity by Mansour Dhao Ibrahim, an aide to Gaddafi who survived the NATO attack on the convoy. Dhao, who was then the head of the People's Guard, was with Gaddafi during his final days and told Human Rights Watch officials on Saturday, October 23 how he was wounded and Gaddafi was killed. According to Dhao,

[T]he decision for Gaddafi to stay in Sirte was based on Muatassim, the colonel's son. ... Gaddafi's son and the military entourage had reasoned that the city, long known as an important pro-Qaddafi stronghold and under frequent bombardment by NATO airstrikes, was the last place anyone would look.

It was further revealed that:

The colonel traveled with about 10 people, including close aides and guards. Muatassim, who commanded the loyalist forces, traveled separately from his father, fearing that his own satellite phone was being tracked. Apart from a phone, which the colonel used to make frequent statements to a Syrian television station that became his official outlet, Colonel Qaddafi was largely cut off from the world.

It was this satellite phone that was tracked, so that when Sirte was bombed to smithereens, there was only one option left for Gaddafi, and that was to make a run to escape.

After August 21, 2001, British newspapers *The Telegraph* and *The Independent* had been reporting that British SAS forces and US special forces had been scouring the Sirte area for Gaddafi, unable to find him. According to these reports, when the resistance continued for two months, the British and US special forces on the ground, disguised as Libyan NTC fighters, had been coordinating the bombing campaign of Sirte. These forces synchronised the bombing, and one or two weeks before the execution,

'NATO had pinpointed Gaddafi's position after an intelligence breakthrough'. Once the SAS and the coordinating forces confirmed Gaddafi's position, 'an American drone and an array of NATO eavesdropping aircraft had been trained on his Sirte stronghold to ensure he could not escape'.

The possibility of escape had been uppermost in the minds of Africans who had followed the Libyan support for Idi Amin of Uganda in the 1978/79 Kagera war. When the Tanzanian army had taken control of most of the cities in Uganda, the Tanzanian military left the road to Jinja open so that Idi Amin and the Libyans who supported him could escape. Amin used this route to leave Uganda and died peacefully in his sleep in Saudi Arabia 24 years later. Tanzania was not fighting against Idi Amin personally, but against the reign of terror that he had brought on Uganda. Gaddafi had supported Idi Amin but he did not learn the major lessons of that Libyan intervention and the Kagera war. We know that Gaddafi escaped to Sirte.

Reports in the international media are that some of the security officials around Gaddafi engaged private security firms through a British security outfit in Kenya. These international reports stated that a team of South African mercenaries had helped Muammar Gaddafi's family out of the war zone of Tripoli, to hide out in Algeria. After this operation, a second team was supposed to have gone to Libya to assist the escape of Gaddafi. However, newspapers knowledgeable about the historic operations of British intelligence in Africa stated that, 'intelligence sources believe there were agents among the mercenaries, or in some of the security companies, who were spying for the transitional government and reporting the mercenaries' movements.'

This information on the role of the double agents, some of whom were killed in the attack on the convoy on the morning of October 20, will assist the reader in understanding the debates, within the National Security Council of the Obama administration, on what to do with Gaddafi once he was caught.²²³ According to *The New York Times*,

There were sharp divisions within Libya's Transitional National Council about what to do with Colonel Qaddafi, according to American officials. Some argued that he should be tried in the country; others said it would impose too big a burden on an interim administration dealing with so many other problems. The ambivalence was mirrored on the American side, with some in the administration concerned that Libya did not have the resources to conduct a proper trial, while others worried that pressuring the Libyans to send him to an international tribunal in The Hague would be viewed as encroaching on their sovereignty.²²⁴

In *Before Qaddafi's Death, U.S. Debated His Future*, Mark Landler stated that the White House had considered the killing of Gaddafi as one of three scenarios. The article also said that, 'Putting the colonel on trial, either in Libya or The Hague, was one of a host of situations for which the administration planned.'

It devolved on the Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, to clear up any ambivalence about what to do with Gaddafi if he were captured. Clearly operating on the basis of specific information, the Secretary of State had travelled to Tripoli on October 18 to stiffen the nerve of would-be waverers in the NTC. She was reported to have said in Tripoli, 'We hope he can be captured or killed soon'.²²⁵

NTC militias and NATO special forces had blocked road exits from Sirte by October 15, and around the same time the debates on execution intensified; the drones were deployed to ensure that Gaddafi did not escape from Sirte. This military operation to block anyone leaving Sirte (essentially a no-drive zone) ensured that hundreds of innocent civilians were killed. For NATO and their surrogates in the NTC, the no-fly zone to protect civilians did not extend to the citizens of Sirte.

US Drones and French jets: pinpointing Gaddafi's location

History has the benefit of the testimony of Mr. Dhao to reconstruct the gory details of the execution of Gaddafi. We can quote him extensively because *The New York Times* carried the full narrative before the military information operations and psychological warfare sectors of NATO could properly manage the news:

*About two weeks ago, as the former rebels stormed the city center, the colonel and his sons were trapped shuttling between two houses in a residential area called District No. 2. They were surrounded by hundreds of former rebels, firing at the area with heavy machine guns, rockets and mortars. 'The only decision was whether to live or to die,' Mr. Dhao said. Colonel Qaddafi decided it was time to leave, and planned to flee to one of his houses nearby, where he had been born. On Thursday, a convoy of more than 40 cars was supposed to leave at about around 3 a.m.*²²⁶

With the voice recognition technology picking up any call made by Gaddafi, the drones were called in when the convoy carrying Gaddafi was pinpointed. The *Daily Telegraph* of Britain reported that,

They built up a normal pattern of life picture so that when something unusual happened this morning such as a large group of vehicles gathering together, that came across as highly unusual activity and the decision was taken to follow them and prosecute an attack. Electronic warfare aircraft, either an American Rivet Joint or a French C160 Gabriel, also picked up Gaddafi's movements as he attempted to escape.²²⁷

On the day that Gaddafi was executed, British journalists were not shy to report in the newspapers that US and British special forces were coordinating the hunt for Gaddafi, and that he had been given a code name similar to how the US had given the name 'Geronimo' to Osama Bin Laden.

In a Toyota Land Cruiser, Colonel Qaddafi traveled with his chief of security, a relative, the driver and Mr. Dhao. The colonel did not say much during the drive. NATO warplanes and former rebel fighters found them half an hour after they left. When a missile struck near the car, the airbags deployed, said Mr. Dhao, who was hit by shrapnel in the strike. He said he tried to escape with Colonel Qaddafi and other men, walking first to a farm, then to the main road, toward some drainage pipes. 'The shelling was constant,' Mr. Dhao said, adding that he was struck by shrapnel again and fell unconscious. When he woke up, he was in the hospital.

Sensitive to the repercussions of this attack on the convoy, the British media declared early that the Royal Air Force had not been involved in the aerial attack. In contrast to this equivocation by the British media, and with great bravado, the French took credit for firing the missile that stopped the car carrying Colonel Gaddafi. French Defence Minister Gérard Longuet revealed that a French Mirage-2000 fired a warning shot at a column of several dozen vehicles fleeing Sirte.

The military failures of NATO in Libya were now compounded by the violation of the Geneva Conventions in relation to the summary execution of prisoners of war. The bombing of the innocent civilians in Sirte had been a violation of the Geneva Conventions. When the grainy pictures from cell phone cameras appeared on the World Wide Web, it became even clearer that the nature of the killing of Gaddafi was a clear violation of the Geneva Conventions on the humane treatment of prisoners. Hence the continued effort to manage the information on the circumstances surrounding Gaddafi's last moments.

Managing the news of the nature of Gaddafi's demise

Video footage shows that Gaddafi was wounded and alive after the airstrike. Later footage showed a bruised and bloodied, dead Gaddafi. There is also video footage of the humiliating sodomisation of the wounded Gaddafi. Additionally, there is video footage of Mutassim, Gaddafi's son, alive and then dead. He was smoking a cigarette and drinking water, and in the next video he had a wound on his chest that had clearly not been there before.

In stumbling and clumsy attempts to control the story, the re-packaged story from the NTC was that Gaddafi was killed in crossfire. This idea of the killing in a crossfire was repeated by the Western news outlets fully during the first two days after the reports of the death of Gaddafi. But the inconsistencies were so blatant that it was embarrassing for NATO's psychological warfare experts. Was it crossfire, was it a stray bullet, was it an assassination? There were too many cell phone images of what transpired for the Western intelligence agencies to attempt to cover the clear violation of international law. One British reporter wrote of the killing in this way:

Frame by jerky frame, through footage from jostling handheld camera phones, we watched as the Libyan leader was dragged through the dust, wounded and blood-caked, to a soundtrack of shouting and gunfire. And then the sequel: his corpse cleaned up and on display, a macabre tourist attraction laid out for mockery inside a walk-in fridge.

Another report commented that the synchronisation of the attack on the convoy had been orchestrated by Western special forces, who called in the Misrata militias to ensure that Gaddafi was executed. After the execution, the Misrata elements of the 'uprising' hijacked the bodies of Gaddafi and his son, and kept them in a meat freezer in Misrata. Humiliation was piled upon total disrespect for religious and traditional customs, as the bodies were made a public spectacle. When the bodies started to decompose, they could no longer keep them and Gaddafi and his son were buried in the desert. It was the view of those who queried this execution that the orchestrators of the NATO intervention and the financiers who had been using the resources of the Libyan Investment Authority leaders figured that as long as Gaddafi was alive and at liberty, the NTC had no chance of

establishing its legitimacy and a stable administration, and of calling an end to the war.

One day after the assassination, NATO was too embarrassed by the gruesome sodomisation so the press release from NATO HQ distanced itself from the assassination. I quote the press release in full:

Now that NATO has had the opportunity to conduct a post-strike assessment of yesterday's strike, we are able to provide a more comprehensive picture of events. At approximately 08h30 local time (GMT+2) on Thursday 20 October 2011, NATO aircraft struck 11 armed military vehicles which were part of a larger group of approximately 75 vehicles maneuvering in the vicinity of Sirte. These vehicles were leaving Sirte at high speed and were attempting to force their way around the outskirts of the city. The vehicles had a substantial amount of mounted weapons and ammunition, posing a significant threat to the local civilian population.

The convoy was engaged by NATO aircraft to reduce the threat. Initially, only one vehicle was destroyed, which disrupted the convoy and resulted in many vehicles dispersing and changing direction.

After the disruption, a group of approximately 20 vehicles continued at great speed to proceed in a southerly direction, due west of Sirte, and continuing to pose a significant threat. NATO again engaged these vehicles with another air asset. The post-strike assessment revealed that approximately 10 pro-Qadhafi vehicles were destroyed or damaged.

At the time of the strike, NATO did not know that Qadhafi was in the convoy. NATO's intervention was conducted solely to reduce the threat towards the civilian population, as required to do under our UN mandate. As a matter of policy, NATO does not target individuals.

We later learned from open sources and Allied intelligence that Qadhafi was in the convoy and that the strike likely contributed to his capture. NATO does not divulge specific information on national assets involved in operations.²²⁸

Such statements could not cover the widespread disgust and condemnation of NATO internationally.

One month after Gaddafi's execution, Saif al-Islam was captured in the South of Libya. He was arrested and flown to Zintan by airplane, where he was detained by militants from this region. These militants refused to hand

over Saif al-Islam to the central authorities, who had moved from Benghazi to Tripoli. This refusal was one more manifestation of the disorder and lack of central political control that had erupted in Libya after the NTC declared victory. The strength of the regional militias deepened the destabilisation of Libya, with regional militias staking out territory in a manner similar to Somalia. By the time of the capture of Saif al-Islam, the regional militias were stronger than the interim government's forces and had resorted to jockeying for power against each other. Samir Amin asked the question, 'was the target of the intervention the destruction of Libya?' In recognition that the appearance of these militias struck an even heavier blow than the reports of the deaths of hundreds of civilians, NATO went into damage control instead of the euphoria that was being echoed in the Western press.

NATO's Libyan Mission: A Catastrophic Failure

There is, in the spectacle of Gaddafi's lynching, something revolting. Worse, I fear that it will pollute the essential morality of an insurrection that had been, up to that point, almost exemplary. And anyone who knows something about revolutionary history knows that this could be the tipping point at which a democratic uprising begins to degenerate into its opposite.²²⁹

Was there morality to the insurrection? It is important not to be misdirected by this philosophical detour by Bernard-Henri Lévy. This expression of revulsion by one of the architects of the Western 'humanitarian' mission to Libya – Bernard-Henri Lévy – was one indication of the scale of hypocrisy of the Western intellectual establishment. Lévy made a self-congratulatory film, *The Oath of Tobruk*, where he celebrated how he changed the course of history with one long-distance phone call to Sarkozy, in which he convinced the French president to meet and recognise the rebel leaders of the NTC. He continues to be caught in the morass of confusion among British and French intellectuals who want to claim the high ground of preventing genocide and the deposing of the Gaddafi demon. Not only was this NATO intervention a success, but the intervention was a model to prevent Rwanda-style genocide.

One year after the UN Security Council resolution on 'responsibility to protect', it is clear that the threat of 'genocide' was exaggerated in order to precipitate Western military intervention in North Africa. From the time of the incessant bombing Amr Moussa distanced the Arab League from the bombing campaign. The AU was explicit in its opposition to the NATO bombings. The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and independent human rights organisations around the world called for investigations into war crimes committed by NATO. In response to these calls, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, the former Prosecutor of the ICC, told the UN Security Council on November 2, 2011 that NATO troops would be investigated alongside rebel soldiers and regime forces for alleged breaches of the laws of war during the battle to overthrow Col. Muammar Gaddafi.²³⁰ In a briefing to the Security Council, Moreno-Ocampo said 'there are

allegations of crimes committed by NATO forces [and] these allegations will be examined impartially and independently'.

These statements were made before a Security Council that wanted answers as to the manner of Muammar and Mutassim Gaddafi's killings. In the immediate aftermath of Gaddafi's execution, the discovery of 53 corpses at the Mahari hotel and of another ten dumped in a nearby reservoir revealed the extent of the bloodletting, indiscriminate killings and blatant disregard for the basic security of persons. After the assassination, international human rights advocates reminded Western citizens that Article 13 of the Third Geneva Convention clearly states, 'Prisoners of war must at all times be protected, particularly against acts of violence or intimidation and against insults and public curiosity'.

In August 2011, when African intellectuals and the court of African public opinion had been mobilised against the killings of black-skinned Libyans, South African Deputy President Khalema Motlanthe raised the question in the South African parliament whether the ICC would have the will to unearth links and co-ordination between 'rebels' and NATO and bring those who are responsible to book, including the NATO commanders on the ground (and, I would add, NATO politicians as well). Moreno-Ocampo's *volte-face* before the Security Council came at a time of deep divisions within NATO. In public, the NATO information department was claiming that 'the actions of NATO were in compliance with international law'. In private, the NATO information operations experts wanted Western media to focus on Gaddafi's crimes. Nicolas Beger, Director of the Amnesty International European Institutions Office rebutted that '[i]f there were to be evidence that NATO is also involved in activities illegal under international law, something should be done about that. Nobody should be allowed to commit war crimes, and nobody should be able to get away with it'. Beger called for an impartial probe into Gaddafi's death. 'If he was captured alive and then killed, that's a war crime. That's clear.'²³¹

With the tide of the information barrage turning against NATO and the 'rebels', the information department of the US Africa Command went silent. When the bombing had started and there was euphoria that the regime would fall in a few weeks, the AFRICOM Commander was everywhere, giving interviews. By the time of the stalemate, AFRICOM receded and public information on the 'progress' of the mission came from NATO briefings. After the negative publicity associated with mass graves, Ivo H. Daalder, US Permanent Representative to NATO, and Adm. James G. Stavridis, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, wrote in an opinion piece

that the NATO mission was 'an historic victory for the people of Libya'. This was the same statement that had been issued by the British Foreign Secretary, William Hague. Senator John McCain in the US and French politicians all made similar statements about the historic victory. Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the NATO Secretary General, flew to Tripoli on October 31, 2011 and declared the end of NATO operations in Libya. In his speech, he gloated, 'It's great to be in free Libya'.

*Libya is finally free. From Benghazi to Brega, from Misrata to the Nafusa mountains and Tripoli. Your courage, determination and sacrifice have transformed this country and helped change the region. At midnight tonight, a successful chapter in NATO's history is coming to an end. But you have already started writing a new chapter in the history of Libya. A new Libya, based on freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and reconciliation.*²⁵²

But that 'successful' chapter did not come to an end. The chapter of democracy, freedom and human rights that Rasmussen referred to was very different from the reality of hundreds of militias creating the kind of mayhem and insecurity that had not been seen in Libya for over 40 years. In most parts of the world, especially in the countries comprising the Group of 77, diplomats and policy makers raised their voices to say that NATO exceeded its mandate to protect Libyan civilians and became the air force to install jihadists in what was essentially a civil war. From within Britain itself, Seumas Milne wrote in *The Guardian* newspaper that '[i]f the purpose of the NATO intervention in Libya was to "protect civilians" and save lives, it has been a catastrophic failure'. Milne argued convincingly, even before the information from the UN Human Rights Council came out, that while the death toll in Libya when NATO intervened was perhaps around 1 000–2 000 (judging by UN estimates), eight months later 'it is probably more than ten times that figure. Estimates of the numbers of dead over the last eight months – as NATO leaders vetoed ceasefires and negotiations – range from 10 000 up to 50 000'.²⁵³

Milne then went to the core of the reason for the intervention: the effort to regain the ascendancy after the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt. He wrote that, of the 50 000,

uncounted thousands will be civilians, including those killed by Nato bombing and Nato-backed forces on the ground. These figures dwarf the death tolls in this year's other most bloody Arab uprisings, in Syria and Yemen. Nato has not

*protected civilians in Libya – it has multiplied the number of their deaths, while losing not a single soldier of its own. For the Western powers, of course, the Libyan war has allowed them to regain ground lost in Tunisia and Egypt, put themselves at the heart of the upheaval sweeping the most strategically sensitive region in the world.*²³⁴

Alan Kuperman, from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, spoke directly to the idea of success in Libya to draw attention to the 8 000–30 000 persons who died as a result of the NATO intervention.²³⁵

Worldwide opposition

The challenge to the accepted narrative in the West that the NATO intervention was a success was most explicit in Africa. The AU never relented in the condemnation of the NATO operation. Undoubtedly, the moral ground for the AU in the year 2011 had been diminished by holding its annual summit in Equatorial Guinea and conferring legitimacy to the leadership of Teodoro Obiang Nguema. Many of the leaders who attended the summit did not have the legitimacy to critique Western destruction and bombing. However, the experiences of African migrants, the images of Africans drowning in the Mediterranean Sea, the treatment of African migrants and the cleansing of the town of Tawergha gave the Libyan war greater urgency than the posturing of individual leaders. This grassroots urgency for action was reflected in the deliberations of the Peace and Security Council of the AU. In their experience of armed conflicts, the statement by Anders Fogh Rasmussen about a new chapter was hollow – if not a continuation of the disinformation that misrepresented what happened in Libya over the eight months of bombing.

From all corners of Africa there was condemnation when *The New York Times* reported on the widespread mourning for Gaddafi. What must have surprised Western news agencies was that the demonization of Gaddafi had not succeeded in Africa. Millions of Africans disagreed with and opposed Gaddafi, but they were outraged at the flagrant disregard for African lives. Older Africans remembered the matter of foreign violation of African space vividly when Tanzania opposed the Entebbe raid by the Israeli commandos. At that moment, Tanzania was in a near state of war with Idi Amin of Uganda, but the Israelis had violated a higher principle than that of the differences between Tanzania and Uganda. Israel had invaded Africa, and

Africans opposed foreign invaders. Julius Nyerere invoked the sovereignty of Africa in the face of the Israeli attack. In June 2011, the AU's High-Level ad hoc Committee on Libya invoked the long traditions of struggles against colonialism:

*An attack on Libya or any other member of the African Union without express agreement by the AU is a dangerous provocation ... sovereignty has been a tool of emancipation of the peoples of Africa who are beginning to chart transformational paths for most of the African countries after centuries of predation by the slave trade, colonialism and neocolonialism. Careless assaults on the sovereignty of the African countries are, therefore, tantamount to inflicting fresh wounds on the destiny of the African peoples.*²³⁶

This sentiment from the Ugandan representative ran deep in Africa. In 2010, Gaddafi had called for the partitioning of Nigeria and there was a clear body of opinion in Nigeria that wanted to see the end of the Libyan leadership – but not by foreign invaders. Former Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu condemned the killing of Gaddafi, saying mob justice and violence should always be deplored:

*The manner of the killing of Muammar Gaddafi on Thursday totally detracts from the noble enterprise of instilling a culture of human rights and democracy in Libya ... the people of Libya should have demonstrated better values than those of their erstwhile oppressor.*²³⁷

Tutu went on to condemn Hilary Clinton for celebrating the death of Gaddafi, saying, 'Nor is killing a human being something to be celebrated'.

The court of African public opinion changed drastically against NATO and the allies who participated in the bombing and remained silent when black-skinned Africans were being killed. More significantly, the African response to the instability in the Sahel after the NATO debacle demonstrated the need for a stronger body to forge African Unity. The *coup d'état* in Mali, the heightened rebellions across the Sahel and the proliferation of weapons demonstrated that the issues of destruction and destabilisation could not be confined to Libya. Tons of weapons that had been held in storage by the Gaddafi regime flowed outside of Libya into her neighbours, with the forces of the Tuareg rebellion strengthened with new weaponry. The US deputy representative to the UN said, during a Security Council briefing in New York, 'We are concerned about the porous nature of the border between

Chad, Niger and Libya and the risk of weapons, including MANPADS [shoulder-launched missiles capable of downing a low-flying airliner], moving across those borders. These weapons, in the hands of terrorists, could further destabilise already fragile areas of the Sahel and surrounding regions'.²³⁸

International diplomats listened with eager ears to this talk of 'terrorism' from a government that had installed Jihadists in control of Libya. Was the US planning to use this rhetoric later for further intervention in North Africa? Samir Amin drew from the experiences of the shifting positions of the US in Eastern Africa to argue that what the West wanted was a Somali-type situation in Libya:

*... intervention has succeeded in the sense that it destroyed the regime of Gaddafi. But what is the result of the success? Is it democratic Libya? Well, one should laugh at that when one knows that the president of the new regime is nobody else than the very judge who condemned to death the Bulgarian nurses. What a curious democracy it is! But it has also led to the dislocation of the country on a Somalian pattern: that is, local powers – all of them in the name of so-called 'Islam', but local warlords – with the destruction of the country. One can raise the question: was this the target of the intervention – that is, the destruction of the country?*²³⁹

The Libyan society under Gaddafi had been one of the anchors of the forging of African Unity. Gaddafi had supported the speedy creation of the African Central Bank and the building of an African Monetary Union. These initiatives were now receiving urgent discussion in light of the international capitalist crisis. The aftermath of the Libyan intervention and the destruction of that society reinforced the Pan African adage that no African will be free until all of Africa is free. This desire for freedom beyond colonial borders was being impressed on Africa by the independence declaration of the Tuareg state, Azawad, in the north of Mali. This declaration had far reaching implications for all of the states of North and West Africa in so far as the Azawad peoples are spread across Mali, Libya, Niger and Algeria. The potential for the exploration of oil and minerals along with the promise of new solar technologies had made the Sahara prime property in Africa.

European Isolation in Africa

The heightened instability in Africa consequent to the destruction of Libya by NATO was strengthened by new calls for accountability. Within Africa, the media reported on the dislocations and the consequences of NATO military actions. New voices emerged from within the left in the US, energised by the African commitment to the opposition to NATO. Vijay Prashad argued that,

The scandal here is that NATO, a military alliance, refuses any civilian oversight of its actions. It operated under a U.N. mandate and yet refuses to allow a U.N. evaluation of its actions. NATO, in other words, operates as a rogue military entity, outside the bounds of the prejudices of democratic society. The various human rights reports simply underline the necessity of a formal and independent evaluation of NATO's actions in Libya.²⁴⁰

This characterisation of NATO as a rogue military entity by Prof. Prashad differed significantly from mainstream European scholars, who continued to parrot the ideas from the 'rebels' and from the press information of Nicolas Sarkozy and David Cameron. In fact, the narrative of the projection of force to combat al-Qaeda in the Maghreb (AQIM) intensified with the Royal African Society in Britain-hosted closed meetings in the Houses of Parliament on 'Libya in Transition – Implications and Opportunities for Britain'. While repeating the mantra about combating terrorism in the Maghreb, the British were explicit in their objectives:

Winning the peace in Libya is a core British national interest. A power vacuum in Libya would have deleterious effects on illegal migration to Europe, combating AQIM, European energy security, investment opportunities and thus European economic recovery. The present British government has, therefore, committed itself to facilitating an efficient transition of power from the NTC to a legitimate constitutional government in Libya based on the rule of law, combating dangerous radicalism, honouring existing contracts, nurturing civil society and the private sector, etc.

Very few writings express the ideas about the Libyan war and European economic recovery so clearly. As a corollary to European economic

recovery and guaranteeing European energy and investment opportunities, Europeans had to diminish the growing influence of China in Libya and Africa. Of the major construction, housing and power projects in Libya, Chinese construction and state-owned enterprises were by far the most visible among the external work force in Libya. The Turks were the second largest investor in the construction sector. European writers were subtle in their claims 'to defend national interests', but US commentators such as Paul Craig Roberts argued that the objective of the war in Libya was to evict China from Libya and Africa.²⁴¹ This analysis was put to paper by F. William Engdahl, who argued that the war in Libya was actually a challenge to China in Africa.²⁴² Going back to the statements from the US think tanks and military consultants about the need to build the US Africa Command to contain China, Engdahl wrote about the formation of AFRICOM and that,

NATO's Libya campaign was and is all about oil. But not about simply controlling Libyan high-grade crude because the USA is nervous about reliable foreign supplies. It rather is about controlling China's free access to long-term oil imports from Africa and from the Middle East. In other words, it is about controlling China itself.

The Chinese foreign policy establishment did not help itself with its timid response to the NATO intervention. Prior to the changed international economic situation, when the People's Republic of China was relatively weaker commercially, the Chinese political leadership had articulated a principle of non-interference in each other's internal affairs. By 2010, this principle had been overtaken by the aggressive investment patterns of Chinese corporations, both state-owned and private. There were more than one million Chinese workers involved in other countries. Hence, while the Chinese government maintained its non-interventionist position, its commercial activities had overtaken its posture of non-intervention. The Chinese intellectual and foreign policy establishment timidly engaged politically and muted their criticism of NATO's bombings. From the platform of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) summit in China, there had been a tepid statement in support of the position of the AU. While the Russians were using their media to challenge the statements coming from NATO and to continuously call for the reconvening of the Security Council to discuss Libya, the Chinese were more cautious.

With thirteen large-scale projects in Libya being undertaken by the Chinese, China was by far the largest investor in the country. This despite the fact that, prior to the 2006 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC)

meeting in Beijing, Gaddafi had lobbied African leaders to stay away from China. Gaddafi's antipathy towards China notwithstanding, the Libyan leadership had engaged with Chinese state-owned enterprises to build houses, a coastal railway and major cement factories. Hence, aside from migrant workers from Africa, the Chinese were the largest contingent of expatriate workers. Right after the war broke out, China sent out navy, army and air force missions to Libya to evacuate 35 860 Chinese citizens. This was the first time that China had deployed its navy, army and air force together on an evacuation mission, but throughout the operation China demonstrated strong mobilisation and delivery ability. This successful evacuation was viewed through different lenses across the world. For Africans, the Chinese evacuation of its citizens and its silence on the propaganda about 'African mercenaries' was troubling; for Western military analysts, the successful evacuation was another indication of China's ability to project force well beyond its borders.²⁴³

The French President, who was concerned about the deepening financial crisis in Europe, flew to Beijing (supposedly en route to New Caledonia) to plead for assistance from China and to promise that there would be a role for Chinese firms in the reconstruction of Libya.²⁴⁴ However, Nicolas Sarkozy could not make promises about Libya because he himself faced an uncertain future. Having taken the lead in the bombing of Libya, his leadership was rejected by the French voters in the elections of April 2012.

The Italian political leadership had been nervous about Sarkozy's activism in Libya. Italian ministers were reminding French politicians about the Italian 'prerogative' in Libya. Italian politicians and business leaders stated on Italian radio and television that 'Rome must now assert its leadership in economic relations', and complained that its prerogative in Libya 'is being strongly challenged by Paris'. Libya had renewed its robust relationship with Italy after 2008, when Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi invited Gaddafi to Rome and a 'friendship and cooperation agreement' was signed between the two countries. Italy had agreed to invest US\$5 billion in the construction of a Libyan coast road, and in exchange Libya had promised to favour Italy with regard to oil and gas supplies. It was a pure barter transaction and Italy's Eni had received extensive production concessions, which were later extended to the year 2047. Because of these relations, Italy only joined the NATO war against Libya after it was clear that France and Britain were going all out to remove Gaddafi.

Of these former colonial powers the most self-confident were the British, who were aggressively promoting British business interest to the NTC. Mention was already made of the closed door meetings at the Houses of Parliament. Lord Trefgarne, the chairman of the Libyan British Business Council, was emblematic of the British aristocracy, who were salivating over new opportunities for British companies in Libya. David Anderson, of Oxford University, was probably typical of the fixated Western European academics who remained worried about who would be the winner among the Europeans. Writing soon after the NATO control of Tripoli, Anderson wrote about the insensate struggles and discussions about oil: 'Europe's oil giants Eni, Total, BP and Repsol YPF are perfectly positioned to take advantage of these commercial opportunities'. Nicholas Sarkozy had flown to Libya even before the execution of Gaddafi, but David Cameron could not countenance the French discussing the future without the British. What was not said by European academics writing on Libya was that behind the British, French and Italian manoeuvring was the support for the different families and regional militias jockeying for power in post-Gaddafi Libya.

US companies worked quietly, through their partners in the Gulf, to rearrange control over the LIA. Qatar was most explicit in its financial support for the Islamists. It was unclear where the interests of Qatar and the US financial houses met. There were press reports that Mohammed Layas as was being replaced as head of the LIA. Numerous obstacles were placed in the process of unfreezing Libyan assets. The Western countries dictated that the new Libyan leadership follow a road map – laid by the IMF and the World Bank – for expending their own money.

Western financial institutions benefited from the political fragmentation within Libya to the point where the assets were being returned to Libya in a trickle. Political infighting for dominance over the energy and banking sectors increased among the 'reformers' who were rushing back from exile, as an elitist aristocratic and semi feudal political leadership sought to impose itself on the feuding militias that controlled different cities. In this political maze, Shukri Ghanem, former head of Libya's National Oil Company, died mysteriously in Austria in early 2012. The privatisation and liberalisation that Ghanem had started under Gaddafi was now to be completed by the NTC, under the guidance of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). A new roadmap for the economy of Libya was spelt out by the IMF, as it wrote of the 'challenges and opportunities' in Libya.²⁴⁵

Conclusion:

NATO and the Recursive Processes of Failure and Destruction in Libya

The NATO intervention in Libya, under the mantra of ‘responsibility to protect’, came at a crucial turning point in the history of the world. Multiple crises – economic, ecological, political, military and social – were demanding for new modes of social and economic management. Exploitation, alienation and dehumanisation had deepened in Africa after years of structural adjustment and IMF economic principles. Libya escaped the worst aspects of this ‘market’ system by seeking to organise a distributive economy. Under the Gaddafi leadership, all students had access to higher education and Libya had the lowest infant mortality rate in Africa. A lower percentage of people lived below the poverty line in Libya than in the Netherlands. Libya had the highest Human Development Index of any country on the continent.

Yet, these material advantages were not sufficient for a generation of Libyans who had lived for forty-two years under one leader. This generation knew that Libya was sitting on billions of dollars of oil, gas and the largest underground water resources in Africa. Proper management of these resources by the Libyan people continues to be a threat to European domination of Africa as a whole, and North Africa in particular. The revolts against neo-liberalism in Tunisia and Egypt had exposed the frailty of the governing structures across North Africa. Youths in Libya were inspired by the Tunisian and Egyptian experiences, but their narrow political experience weakened their ability to prevent the hijacking of the protests in Libya. Thus a small group of Libyans with deep intellectual and ideological affinity to the West set themselves up as leaders of this uprising. Some of them had been called ‘reformers’ and had been closely associated with Saif al-Islam.

From the evidence on the recent history of Libya, these ‘reformers’ had internalised neo-liberal economic thinking and wanted Libya to become like Kuwait or the Gulf States – basically client states of Western capital. State capitalism under Gaddafi had stifled the capabilities and autonomy of these ‘liberal reformers’. This small group of capitalists was confronted by

another faction inside Libya that promoted Libyan 'resources nationalism'. These nationalists promoted policies designed to increase Libyan government control over and share of revenue from hydrocarbon resources. Western leaders were anxious when talk about reparations from Italy was implemented by the return of cultural artefacts, along with the signing of a treaty under which Italy was to pay US\$200 million per year for 25 years as compensation for 'colonial wrong-doing'.

The Bretton Woods institutions were the chief architects of policies that extended exploitation and capital flight from Africa. In Libya after the sanctions, however, instead of money leaving the control of Libyans, the leadership had renegotiated the EPSA IV agreements whereby major Western oil companies were collectively made to pay US\$5.4 billion in upfront 'bonus' payments. With careful management of the oil revenues, Libya built up substantial reserves to the point that the society held close to US\$200 billion in overseas financial institutions. As we have demonstrated in this study, sections of the Libyan economic nationalists were poised to play a more dominant role within the Bahrain-based Arab Banking Corporation. The Gulf States had become the epicentre of the financialisation of energy resources through the activities of the Intercontinental Exchange. The ICE was the brainchild of Morgan Stanley, Goldman Sachs, British Petroleum, Deutsche Bank, Dean Witter, Royal Dutch Shell, SG Investment Bank and Totalfina. These financial and energy institutions under the ICE had failed to halt the growth of non-Western International Oil Companies (IOC), particularly from India, Japan, Russia and China. That PetroChina had overtaken Exxon Mobil as the largest oil company in the world did not bode well for the future dominance of the dollar, the IMF and US capitalism. This ascendancy of Chinese petroleum companies, along with the rapid rise of the Brazilian firm Petrobras, created a new international political economy. By 2011, China had overtaken Japan and Brazil had overtaken Britain in the league of economic powerhouses.

Neither Brazil nor China fell under the complete control of the Western energy and financial institutions. Through energetic and skilful negotiations, the political leaders of Brazil, Russia and China had made great strides in negotiating new agreements with the Libyan leadership. Slowly, China had become a significant trading partner of Libya's, with over 35 000 Chinese nationals working in the Libyan construction and telecommunications sectors. In April 2008, Russian President Vladimir Putin reportedly travelled to Libya, accompanied by 400 assistants, journalists and executives, to secure an 'agreement to swap Libya's \$4.5

billion Soviet-era debt to Russia' for 'a large railroad contract and several future contracts in housing construction and electricity development'. Several memoranda of understanding were signed with Russian energy giant Gazprom. During that visit, Gaddafi had expressed opposition to NATO's expansion to Ukraine and Georgia – in short, to a Global NATO.

From the point of view of Western corporations, this increasing presence of Russia, Brazil and China in Libya challenged the old world order. Since 1945, scholars and writers from differing sides of the ideological divide have written on the centrality of the oil companies in shaping the foreign and military policies of the US. There are no shortages of books on the *Seven Sisters of Oil* that underscored the dominance of US and British companies in the international petroleum business and the military/financial imperatives that flowed from this dominance.

For a short period, the emergence of the Euro had suggested that the EU wanted to challenge the US dollar, but the world capitalist crisis placed the challenge from a different source. State-owned oil companies from seven major states – China's CNPC, Russia's Gazprom, Iran's NIOC, Venezuela's PDVSA, Brazil's Petrobras, Malaysia's Petronas and Saudi Arabia's Aramco – had shaken the international financial system, where new barter arrangements were being made to shelter these states against the vagaries of the US dollar. Among these seven countries there was only one firm ally of the West and the dollar, viz Saudi Arabia.

Libya's resource nationalism and Gaddafi's support of a strong AU

Both Iraq and Libya were societies with large reserves of oil and natural gas that could further tip the balance of forces against the trade in energy indexed in the US dollar. After the end of the war in Iraq, their leaders developed close ties with Iran and began making statements bordering on resource nationalism. Energy consultants who had studied Iraq predicted that, by 2020, this state would be a major global source of oil production growth.²⁴⁶ In 2009, the Iraqi government awarded the redevelopment of 11 of the country's oilfields to several international oil companies.

Libyan nationalism was driving the Libyan leadership to seek closer relations with Brazil, Russia, India and China. This nationalism was accompanied by a renewed drive, by the Libyan leadership, for the creation of the AU and moving with speed towards a Union government. Libya's leadership had set aside resources to realise the dreams of the three major

pan-African institutions – the African Monetary Fund, the African Investment Bank and the African Central Bank. The seat of the Libyan Investment Bank was in Libya, and the nationalist leadership in Libya had planned to be as aggressive with investments in Africa as they had been assertive in the meetings of the AU calling for a Union government. Such an AU government would place Africa in a central position in the world economic league.

Six of the ten fastest growing economies in the world were in Africa, and everyday there were reports of new sources of oil and gas in Africa. Apart from the traditional exporters of oil and natural gas in Africa – such as Algeria, Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Libya, Nigeria, Sudan, and Tunisia – there have been new explorations and production in countries such as Ghana, Liberia, Mozambique, Namibia, Tanzania, and Uganda. An AU that harmonised energy production with a Monetary Union and a common currency represented new hopes for Africans while sending tremors for the Western companies that have dominated the continent in the past. The IMF and the World Bank have been responsible for implementing policies that deepened inequalities and exploitation, and the extension of the impoverishment of Africans. African states were developing novel agreements with the ‘emerging’ nations in order to escape the total dominance of the IMF.

Libya had escaped the worse strictures of the IMF medicine of liberalisation and privatisation during the period of sanctions. For close to a decade, the ‘liberal reformers’ inside the government, led by Saif al-Islam, attempted to expand engagement with Western financial institutions after the establishment of the LIA. The LIA was playing in the terrain of the financial oligarchy and did not fully understand the relationship between finance and global political and military power. Gaddafi had proven unpredictable, and his promotion of the AU as well as the ideas of ‘resources nationalism’ were disquieting for the Western powers, even when they were fawning over him.

Wikileaks has enlightened the world as to the attitude of the west to resource nationalism. As the Wikileaks cables exposed, there had been disquiet in the West over the terms of the fourth exploration and production sharing agreement, which were designed to increase the Libyan government’s ‘control over and share of revenue from hydrocarbon resources’. The Libyan reformers had warned the US embassy that this threat of resource nationalism and support for the AU would persist as long as Gaddafi was the leader.²⁴⁷ Neither Shukri Ghanem nor Muammar Gaddafi survived the NATO intervention.

While Gaddafi and Ghanem have fallen, there is no guarantee that the IMF and the Western financial power will survive this current depression. Not one day goes by without fresh news of the depth of the depression. If the intent of Sarkozy was to save the Euro by launching the NATO war, then every day it is becoming clearer that the Western dominance of Africa is coming to an end. Sarkozy did not achieve the political capital that he expected from the war against Africa, and the Euro zone crisis has weakened the position of European capital. Moreover, along with the economic crisis, every day Western banks are being exposed for their criminal behaviour. Perhaps the most egregious has been the manipulation of the benchmark for international interest rates – the Libor (London Interbank Offered Rate) – by a number of Western banks.

Africans who remember the days of the debt crisis have not forgotten that, with every percentage point change in this Libor rate, billions of dollars were added to their debt. The daily Libor rate is supposed to measure the average cost of short-term loans between major banks. This rate determines the interest rates for loans and investments that affect hundreds of millions of people around the world. The Libor was supposed to be established by 'market' mechanisms, but it has been discovered that the banks were rigging the rates to maintain their profitability after the fall of Lehman Brothers and the Wall Street meltdown. The amount of money affected by the most recent exposure of manipulation and phony rates was at least US\$500 trillion. This scandal, which involved Barclays Bank, provided a clear outline of the mechanisms by which a handful of giant banks rig the so-called 'free market' to boost their profits and the fortunes of their executives and big investors. Libor influences trillions of dollars of loans and credit default swaps, and the fact that the banks were manipulating this rate goes to the heart of the global financial system and further exposes the international capitalist system. Fixing the rates exposed one more spoke in the wheel of economic plunder and predation whose result is mass unemployment, poverty and ever-increasing social inequality.

We have already drawn attention to studies on the US financial sector and to the books *13 Bankers* and *Predator Nation*. This latter makes an explicit link between the Monitor Group of Boston and the unfolding military actions in Libya. The author excoriated the academics who had been making journeys to Libya.

As its wealth and power grew, it subverted America's political system (including both political parties), government and academic institutions in order to free itself

*from regulation. As deregulation progressed, the industry became even more unethical and dangerous producing ever larger financial crises and more blatant criminality. Since the 1990s, its power has been sufficient to insulate bankers not only from effective regulation but even from criminal law enforcement. The financial sector is now a parasitic and destabilizing industry that constitutes a major drag on America's economic growth.*²⁴⁸

In the process of outlining the criminal linkages between all sectors of US society, the author excluded how this level of criminality in the financial sector affected the military.

This monograph started by considering the expansion of NATO, and how this new and enlarged, Global NATO coincided with the expansion of the neo-liberal operations of Wall Street and the new forms of finance capital. The monograph was very explicit about the relationship between the financial military complex and the competitiveness – or lack thereof – of US capitalism. At the end of the Second World War, when the US was the dominant economic power, it could engage Africa at numerous levels – economic, cultural, religious, military, social, and through what some international relations theorists called ‘soft power’. From the start of this century, the dominant engagement of the US in the international system has been a military engagement. The business model of finance capital was global, and the rise of this deregulated financial sector encroached upon all parts of the world. Private military companies have been created by different branches of the financial industry to entrench US position, even when this position had been overtaken by a changed world economy.

Libya was caught in this new maze of the financialisation of energy resources as the ‘reformers’ in Libya established a sovereign wealth fund and aggressively deepened integration into Western financial institutions. This integration of Libyan resources into the global financial system brought Libya into the clutches of Goldman Sachs, described as the vampire squid. Libya lost close to one billion dollars at Goldman Sachs, and at the time of the start of the rebellion there had been no solution proposed by Goldman Sachs on how Libya would effectively recoup its losses. Since the end of the Gaddafi regime, there has been very little discussion of Libya recouping its losses. Instead, the new leaders of Libya are being advised to go back to the IMF. The IMF is integrated into the Wall Street–Treasury nexus, which will deepen the Western choke hold over Libya. Matt Taidbi described the global reach of Goldman Sachs by noting,

The first thing you need to know about Goldman Sachs is that it's everywhere. The world's most powerful investment bank is a great vampire squid wrapped around the face of humanity, relentlessly jamming its blood funnel into anything that smells like money. In fact, the history of the recent financial crisis, which doubles as a history of the rapid decline and fall of the suddenly swindled dry American empire, reads like a Who's Who of Goldman Sachs graduates.²⁴⁹

The failure of the Western financial model has brought the world to the most serious depression since 1930. Sir Mervyn King, Governor of the Bank of England, has been warning that this crisis may be deeper and more costly than the Great Depression. Africans remember that it was in the midst of the last depression that the Italians launched the invasion and occupation of Abyssinia. Then, Africans warned that this attempt to solve the European economic crisis by militarily occupying Africa would lead to a global conflagration. Humanity did not heed the warnings of Africa and the military techniques of bombing civilians and creating pogroms were taken to a new level of industrial warfare by Adolf Hitler. The League of Nations shattered in that depression, and out of the ashes of that war emerged the UN and the Bretton Woods system. NATO was the third rail of Western capitalist dominance after 1945.

Deft international management of this current depression will be required to ensure that the UN does not suffer the same fate as the League of Nations. In the present international conjuncture, the calls for the democratisation of the UN need to be intensified to ensure that the same consequences of the depression do not consume humanity. This monograph has been written as part of the struggle for global demilitarisation and the democratisation of the Security Council of the UN.

NATO's mission in Africa backfires

The tasks of global demilitarisation have been sharpened by the fallout in Africa of the Libyan intervention. Far from showing the successful engagement of the Western military alliance, the intervention added to the failures of a Global NATO in Afghanistan. Throughout this monograph the author marshalled evidence to demonstrate that, far from saving lives, the NATO intervention caused thousands of civilian deaths and took sides in a war that destroyed Libya. The colossal failure of the Bretton Woods institutions in Africa has now been reinforced by the catastrophic failure of

NATO. Even staunch allies of NATO have declared that NATO emerged from Libya weaker than when it went into it:

*The military operation itself created an image of NATO's limitations rather than its power.*²⁵⁰

Military strategists have been willing to explore the failures by using code words such as 'limitations', to divert attention from the calls for criminal investigation into the actions of NATO in Libya. Western social scientists have been less willing or able to retreat from the ideas of the Hobbesian state of violence in Africa, with the attendant divisions, dislocations and bloodletting that has given rise to that literature about 'failed states in Africa'. This monograph went into great detail to outline the corruption of the intellectual exercise by the financial elite and the manipulation that serves to distort the realities of what is going on in Africa. The argument of the monograph was that one could not separate the intellectual work of the Western intellectual establishment from the demonization and misinformation that was mobilised to generate the UN resolution on protecting civilians. While there has been a blossoming of writings on the 'tribal' allegiances of Libyans to explain the rampant lawlessness by regional militias, this mode of thinking has been rejected by the top scholars in Africa. From the moment the killings and ethnic cleansing in Tawergha became evident, Africans spoke out with one voice against the NATO intervention. Regardless of ideological orientation, the blatant racism and dehumanisation of black-skinned Libyans had created revulsion in Africa. The letter by 200 intellectuals in Africa created a united front among African intellectuals and cultural leaders. The execution and sodomisation of the Libyan leader alerted many African allies of the West that their current alliance does not protect them. As Vladimir Shubin quoted one African diplomat as saying, 'no African country is safe now, after Libya'.

Today, there are new information networks of African youths who are championing the call for the unity of Africa. Scholars and activists are writing that events in Libya are a clear wake-up call for Africa to unite. Charles Abugre is one such scholar, who has followed the footsteps of Tajudeen Abdul Raheem and called for a faster pace for African unity. Abugre quoted Kwame Nkrumah as noting,

If Africa was united, no major power bloc would attempt to subdue it by limited war because, from the very nature of limited war, what can be achieved by it is itself limited. It is only where small states exist that it is possible, by landing a few thousand marines or by financing a mercenary force, to secure a decisive result.

Experience throughout Africa has alerted the new generation to the fact that the same NATO forces that provided the conditions for the execution of Gaddafi will change sides. Despite the hollow support for a 'democratic transition', the rival militias have not shown any commitment to the formal processes of elections and the establishment of a 200-seat National Assembly. Individual states of the NATO war continue to support factional leadership and the war situation in Libya is far from over. Samir Amin rightly argued that, with the divisions in Libya, the West wants a Somalia-type situation where there is nominal partitioning of the country. Yet, the international situation has changed significantly since the destruction and division of Somalia.

Fifty years after Patrice Lumumba was assassinated in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in 1961, Western Europe is in a crisis that will weaken the European domination of African societies and African peoples. Calls for reparative justice in Africa and calls for unity from below came from the World Conference against Racism, and the same constituency in Africa is calling for NATO to be held accountable for civilian deaths in Libya. Today, international law can only be enforced by a new international alliance of societies that want to avoid total destruction. The spill over of the instability into other parts of Africa and the destruction of important historical sites in Timbuktu are creating a new sense of urgency in Africa for united military responses.

Decent human beings all over the world were outraged, and it is now clearer that the decision to execute Muammar Gaddafi was made to silence one voice for anti-imperialism. Far from humiliating and silencing Africans, there is now a realisation that the work for the freedom and unity of Africa must be engaged with even more clarity. The execution had the opposite effect, and the work for expelling foreign military forces from Africa will now be more intense.

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Appendix 1

LIBYA, AFRICA AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER

An Open Letter to the Peoples of Africa and the World from Concerned Africans

We, the undersigned, are ordinary citizens of Africa who are immensely pained and angered that fellow Africans are and have been subjected to the fury of war by foreign powers which have clearly repudiated the noble and very relevant vision enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Our action to issue this letter is inspired by our desire, not to take sides, but to protect the sovereignty of Libya and the right of the Libyan people to choose their leaders and determine their own destiny.

Libya is an African country.

On March 10, the **African Union Peace and Security Council** adopted an important Resolution (3) which spelt out the roadmap to address the Libyan conflict, consistent with the obligations of the AU under Chapter VIII of the UN Charter.

When the UN Security Council adopted its **Resolution 1973**, it was aware of the AU decision which had been announced seven days earlier.

By deciding to ignore this fact, the Security Council further and consciously contributed to the subversion of international law as well as undermining the legitimacy of the UN in the eyes of the African people.

In other ways since then, it has helped to promote and entrench the immensely pernicious process of the international marginalisation of Africa even with regard to the resolution of the problems of the Continent.

Contrary to the provisions of the UN Charter, the UN Security Council declared its own war on Libya on March 17, 2011.

The Security Council allowed itself to be informed by what the International Crisis Group (ICG) in its **June 6, 2011 Report on Libya** characterises as the “more sensational reports that the regime was using its air force to slaughter demonstrators”.

On this basis it adopted Resolution 1973 which mandated the imposition of a “no-fly zone” over Libya, and resolved “to take all necessary measures . . . to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya...”

Thus, first of all, the Security Council used the still unresolved issue in international law of “the right to protect”, the so-called R2P, to justify the Chapter VII military intervention in Libya.

In this context the UN Security Council has committed a litany of offences which have underlined, the further transformation of the Council into a willing instrument of the most powerful among its Member States.

Thus the Security Council produced no evidence to prove that its authorisation of the use of force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter was a proportionate and appropriate response to what had, in reality, in Libya, developed into a civil war.

It then proceeded to ‘outsource’ or ‘sub-contract’ the implementation of its resolutions to NATO, mandating this military alliance to act as a ‘coalition of the willing’.

It did not put in place any mechanism and process to supervise the ‘sub-contractor’, to ensure that it faithfully honours the provisions of its Resolutions.

It has made no effort otherwise to monitor and analyse the actions of NATO in this regard.

It has allowed the establishment of a legally unauthorised ‘Contact Group’, yet another ‘coalition of the willing’, which has displaced it as the authority which has the effective responsibility to help determine the future of Libya.

To confirm this unacceptable reality, **the July 15, 2011 meeting of the ‘Contact Group’ in Istanbul** “reaffirmed that the Contact Group remains the appropriate platform for the international community to be a focal point of contact with the Libyan people, to coordinate international policy and to be a forum for discussion of humanitarian and post-conflict support.”

Duly permitted by the Security Council, the two ‘coalitions of the willing’, NATO and the ‘Contact Group’, have effectively and practically rewritten Resolution 1973.

Thus they have empowered themselves openly to pursue the objective of ‘regime change’ and therefore the use of force and all other means to overthrow the government of Libya, which objectives are completely at variance with the decisions of the UN Security Council.

Because of this, with no regard to UNSC Resolutions 1970 and 1973, they have made bold to declare the government of Libya illegitimate and to proclaim the Benghazi-based '**Transitional National Council**' as "the legitimate governing authority in Libya."

The Security Council has failed to answer the question how the decisions taken by NATO and the 'Contact Group' address the vital issue of "facilitating dialogue to lead to the political reforms necessary to find a peaceful and sustainable solution..."

The actions of its 'sub-contractors', NATO and the 'Contact Group', have positioned the UN as a partisan belligerent in the Libyan conflict, rather than a committed but neutral peacemaker standing equidistant from the Libyan armed factions.

The Security Council has further wilfully decided to repudiate the rule of international law by consciously ignoring the provisions of Chapter VIII of the UN Charter relating to the role of legitimate regional institutions.

The George W. Bush war against Iraq began on March 20, 2003.

The following day, March 21, the UK newspaper, *The Guardian*, published an abbreviated article by the prominent US neo-conservative, Richard Perle, entitled "**Thank God for the death of the UN**".

But the post-Second World War global architecture for the maintenance of international peace and security centred on respect for the UN Charter.

The UN Security Council must therefore know that at least with regard to Libya, it has acted in a manner which will result in and has led to the loss of its moral authority effectively to preside over the critical processes of achieving global peace and the realisation of the objective of peaceful coexistence among the diverse peoples of the world.

Contrary to the provisions of the UN Charter, the UN Security Council authorised and has permitted the destruction and anarchy which has descended on the Libyan people.

- At the end of it all:
- many Libyans will have died and have been maimed;
- much infrastructure will have been destroyed, further impoverishing the Libyan people;
- the bitterness and mutual animosity among the Libyan people will have been further entrenched;
- the possibility to arrive at a negotiated, inclusive and stable settlement will have become that much more difficult;
- instability will have been reinforced among the countries neighbouring Libya, especially the countries of the African Sahel, such as Sudan, Chad, Niger, Mali and Mauritania;

- Africa will inherit a much more difficult challenge successfully to address issue of peace and stability, and therefore the task of sustained development; and,
- those who have intervened to perpetuate violence and war in Libya will have the possibility to set the parameters within which the Libyans will have the possibility to determine their destiny, and thus further constrain the space for the Africans to exercise their right to self-determination.

As Africans we have predicated our future as relevant players in an equitable system of international relations on the expectation that the United Nations would indeed serve “as the foundation of a new world order.”

The ICG Report to which we have referred says:

“The prospect for Libya, but also North Africa as a whole, is increasingly ominous, unless some way can be found to induce the two sides in the armed conflict to negotiate a compromise allowing for an orderly transition to a post-Qaddafi, post-Jamahiriya state that has legitimacy in the eyes of the Libyan people. A political breakthrough is by far the best way out of the costly situation created by the military impasse...”

When Richard Perle wrote in 2003 about the “abject failure of the United Nations”, he was bemoaning the refusal of the UN to submit to dictation by the world's sole superpower, the US.

The UN took this position because it was conscious of, and was inspired by its obligation to act as a true representative of all peoples of the world, consistent with the opening words of the UN Charter – “We the peoples on the United Nations...”

However, and tragically, eight years later, in 2011, the UN Security Council abandoned its commitment to this perspective.

Chastened by the humiliating experience of 2003, when the US demonstrated that might is right, it decided that it was more expedient to submit to the demands of the powerful rather than honour its obligation to respect the imperative to uphold the will of the peoples, including the African nations.

Thus it has communicated the message that it has become no more than an instrument in the hands and service of the most powerful within the system of international relations and therefore the vital process of the peaceful ordering of human affairs.

As Africans we have no choice but to stand up and reassert our right and duty to determine our destiny in Libya and everywhere else on our Continent.

We demand that all governments, everywhere in the world, including Africa, which expect genuine respect by the governed, such as us, should act immediately to assert “that law by which all nations may live in dignity.”

We demand that:

the NATO war of aggression in Libya should end immediately;

the AU should be supported to implement its Plan to help the Libyan people to achieve peace, democracy, shared prosperity and national reconciliation in a united Libya; and,

the UN Security Council must act immediately to discharge its responsibilities as defined in the UN Charter.

Those who have brought a deadly rain of bombs to Libya today should not delude themselves to believe that the apparent silence of the millions of Africans means that Africa approves of the campaign of death, destruction and domination which that rain represents.

We are confident that tomorrow we will emerge victorious, regardless of the death-seeking power of the most powerful armies in the world.

The answer we must provide practically, and as Africans, is — when, and in what ways, will we act resolutely and meaningfully to defend the right of the Africans of Libya to decide their future, and therefore the right and duty of all Africans to determine their destiny!

The AU Road Map remains the only way to peace for the people of Libya.

Appendix 2

AFRICAN UNION PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

265TH MEETING

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

10 MARCH 2011

PSC/PR/COMM.2(CCLXV)

COMMUNIQUE OF THE 265th MEETING OF THE PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

The Peace and Security Council of the African Union (AU), at its 265th meeting held at the level of Heads of State and Government, on 10 March 2011, adopted the following decision on the situation in Libya

Council:

1. **Takes note** of the statements made by the Chairperson of the Commission, as well as by the representative of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya;
2. **Recalls** communiqué PSC/PR/COMM(CCLXI) adopted at its 261st meeting, held on 23 February 2011, and the statement issued, the same day, by the Chairperson of the Commission;
3. **Expresses AU's deep concern** at the prevailing situation in Libya, which poses a serious threat to peace and security in that country and in the region as a whole, as well as to the safety and dignity of Libyans and of the migrant workers, notably the African ones, living in Libya. Council is equally deeply concerned with the resulting humanitarian situation;
4. **Expresses AU's solidarity** with Libya, and **underscores** the legitimacy of the aspirations of the Libyan people for democracy, political reform, justice, peace and security, as well as for socio-economic development, and the need to ensure that these aspirations are fulfilled in a peaceful and democratic manner; in this context, Council takes note of the stated commitment of the Libyan authorities to embark upon the path of reforms;

5. **Reiterates AU's strong and unequivocal condemnation** of the indiscriminate use of force and lethal weapons, whoever it comes from, resulting in the loss of life, both civilian and military, and the transformation of pacific demonstrations into an armed rebellion; Council deeply deplores the loss of human life, conveys its condolences to the families of the victims and wishes early recovery to those who have been injured;
6. **Reaffirms its strong commitment** to the respect of the unity and territorial integrity of Libya, as well as its rejection of any foreign military intervention, whatever its form;
7. **Expresses its conviction** that the current situation in Libya calls for an urgent African action for: (i) the immediate cessation of all hostilities, (ii) the cooperation of the competent Libyan authorities to facilitate the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to the needy populations, (iii) the protection of foreign nationals, including the African migrants living in Libya, and (iv) the adoption and implementation of the political reforms necessary for the elimination of the causes of the current crisis;
8. **Decides** to establish an AU *ad-hoc* High-Level Committee on Libya comprising five Heads of State and Government, as well as the Chairperson of the Commission; Council requests the Chairperson of the Commission to finalize the consultations undertaken in this respect and to announce the composition of the Committee as soon as possible. Council further decides that the Committee is mandated to:
 - (i) engage with all parties in Libya and continuously assess the evolution of the situation on the ground,
 - (ii) facilitate an inclusive dialogue among the Libyan parties on the appropriate reforms,
 - (iii) engage AU's partners, in particular the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the European Union and the United Nations, to facilitate coordination of efforts and seek their support for the early resolution of the crisis;
9. **Further decides** that the AU *ad-hoc* High-Level Committee on Libya be supported by a team comprising the Ministers of Foreign Affairs/ External Relations and/or other relevant Ministers of the countries concerned, as well as the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security;
10. **Requests** all AU Member States to provide logistical and humanitarian support to all African migrant workers wishing to leave Libya, as well as to those neighboring countries forced to bear a disproportionate burden and to the countries of origin to facilitate the socio-economic reinsertion of these migrant workers. In this respect, Council *requests* the Chairperson of the Commission to take the necessary steps to coordinate such an effort, including the convening of a conference to facilitate the mobilization of the required resources and other related measures;

11. **Recalls** the provisions of the OAU Convention on the Elimination of Mercenarism in Africa; Council **requests** the Commission to gather information on the reported presence of mercenaries in Libya and their actions, to enable it, should these reports be confirmed, to take the required measures in line with the Convention;
12. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to transmit this decision to the United Nations Security Council, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the European Union and other concerned AU partners, for their action as appropriate;
13. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

Appendix 3

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

Resolution 1973 (2011)

**Adopted by the Security Council at its
6498th meeting, on 17 March 2011**

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolution 1970 (2011) of 26 February 2011,

Deploing the failure of the Libyan authorities to comply with resolution 1970 (2011),

Expressing grave concern at the deteriorating situation, the escalation of violence, and the heavy civilian casualties,

Reiterating the responsibility of the Libyan authorities to protect the Libyan population and *reaffirming* that parties to armed conflicts bear the primary responsibility to take all feasible steps to ensure the protection of civilians,

Condemning the gross and systematic violation of human rights, including arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture and summary executions,

Further condemning acts of violence and intimidation committed by the Libyan authorities against journalists, media professionals and associated personnel and *urging* these authorities to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law as outlined in resolution 1738 (2006),

Considering that the widespread and systematic attacks currently taking place in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya against the civilian population may amount to crimes against humanity,

Recalling paragraph 26 of resolution 1970 (2011) in which the Council expressed its readiness to consider taking additional appropriate measures, as necessary, to facilitate and support the return of humanitarian agencies and make available humanitarian and related assistance in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,

Expressing its determination to ensure the protection of civilians and civilian populated areas and the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian assistance and the safety of humanitarian personnel,

Recalling the condemnation by the League of Arab States, the African Union, and the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference of the serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that have been and are being committed in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,

Taking note of the final communiqué of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference of 8 March 2011, and the communiqué of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union of 10 March 2011 which established an ad hoc High Level Committee on Libya,

Taking note also of the decision of the Council of the League of Arab States of 12 March 2011 to call for the imposition of a no-fly zone on Libyan military aviation, and to establish safe areas in places exposed to shelling as a precautionary measure that allows the protection of the Libyan people and foreign nationals residing in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,

Taking note further of the Secretary-General's call on 16 March 2011 for an immediate cease-fire,

Recalling its decision to refer the situation in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya since 15 February 2011 to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, and *stressing* that those responsible for or complicit in attacks targeting the civilian population, including aerial and naval attacks, must be held to account,

Reiterating its concern at the plight of refugees and foreign workers forced to flee the violence in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, *welcoming* the response of neighbouring States, in particular Tunisia and Egypt, to address the needs of those refugees and foreign workers, and *calling on* the international community to support those efforts,

Deploing the continuing use of mercenaries by the Libyan authorities,

Considering that the establishment of a ban on all flights in the airspace of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya constitutes an important element for the protection of civilians as well as the safety of the delivery of humanitarian assistance and a decisive step for the cessation of hostilities in Libya,

Expressing concern also for the safety of foreign nationals and their rights in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,

Welcoming the appointment by the Secretary General of his Special Envoy to Libya, Mr. Abdel-Elah Mohamed Al-Khatib and supporting his efforts to find a sustainable and peaceful solution to the crisis in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,

Determining that the situation in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

1. *Demands* the immediate establishment of a cease-fire and a complete end to violence and all attacks against, and abuses of, civilians;
2. *Stresses* the need to intensify efforts to find a solution to the crisis which responds to the legitimate demands of the Libyan people and *notes* the decisions of the Secretary-General to send his Special Envoy to Libya and of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union to send its ad hoc High Level Committee to Libya with the aim of facilitating dialogue to lead to the political reforms necessary to find a peaceful and sustainable solution;

3. *Demands* that the Libyan authorities comply with their obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights and refugee law and take all measures to protect civilians and meet their basic needs, and to ensure the rapid and unimpeded passage of humanitarian assistance;

Protection of civilians

4. *Authorizes* Member States that have notified the Secretary-General, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, and acting in cooperation with the Secretary-General, to take all necessary measures, notwithstanding paragraph 9 of resolution 1970 (2011), to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi, while excluding a foreign occupation force of any form on any part of Libyan territory, and *requests* the Member States concerned to inform the Secretary-General immediately of the measures they take pursuant to the authorization conferred by this paragraph which shall be immediately reported to the Security Council;
5. *Recognizes* the important role of the League of Arab States in matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security in the region, and bearing in mind Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, requests the Member States of the League of Arab States to cooperate with other Member States in the implementation of paragraph 4;

No Fly Zone

6. *Decides* to establish a ban on all flights in the airspace of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya in order to help protect civilians;
7. *Decides further* that the ban imposed by paragraph 6 shall not apply to flights whose sole purpose is humanitarian, such as delivering or facilitating the delivery of assistance, including medical supplies, food, humanitarian workers and related assistance, or evacuating foreign nationals from the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, nor shall it apply to flights authorised by paragraphs 4 or 8, nor other flights which are deemed necessary by States acting under the authorisation conferred in paragraph 8 to be for the benefit of the Libyan people, and that these flights shall be coordinated with any mechanism established under paragraph 8;
8. *Authorizes* Member States that have notified the Secretary-General and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, acting nationally or

- through regional organizations or arrangements, to take all necessary measures to enforce compliance with the ban on flights imposed by paragraph 6 above, as necessary, and *requests* the States concerned in cooperation with the League of Arab States to coordinate closely with the Secretary General on the measures they are taking to implement this ban, including by establishing an appropriate mechanism for implementing the provisions of paragraphs 6 and 7 above,
9. *Calls upon* all Member States, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements, to provide assistance, including any necessary overflight approvals, for the purposes of implementing paragraphs 4, 6, 7 and 8 above;
 10. *Requests* the Member States concerned to coordinate closely with each other and the Secretary-General on the measures they are taking to implement paragraphs 4, 6, 7 and 8 above, including practical measures for the monitoring and approval of authorised humanitarian or evacuation flights;
 11. *Decides* that the Member States concerned shall inform the Secretary-General and the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States immediately of measures taken in exercise of the authority conferred by paragraph 8 above, including to supply a concept of operations;
 12. *Requests* the Secretary-General to inform the Council immediately of any actions taken by the Member States concerned in exercise of the authority conferred by paragraph 8 above and to report to the Council within 7 days and every month thereafter on the implementation of this resolution, including information on any violations of the flight ban imposed by paragraph 6 above;

Enforcement of the arms embargo

13. *Decides that* paragraph 11 of resolution 1970 (2011) shall be replaced by the following paragraph : “Calls upon all Member States, in particular States of the region, acting nationally or through regional organisations or arrangements, in order to ensure strict implementation of the arms embargo established by paragraphs 9 and 10 of resolution 1970 (2011), to inspect in their territory, including seaports and airports, and on the high seas, vessels and aircraft bound to or from the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, if the State concerned has information that provides reasonable grounds to believe that the cargo contains items the supply, sale, transfer or export of which is prohibited by paragraphs 9 or 10 of resolution 1970 (2011) as modified by this resolution, including the

provision of armed mercenary personnel, *calls upon* all flag States of such vessels and aircraft to cooperate with such inspections and authorises Member States to use all measures commensurate to the specific circumstances to carry out such inspections”;

14. *Requests* Member States which are taking action under paragraph 13 above on the high seas to coordinate closely with each other and the Secretary-General and *further requests* the States concerned to inform the Secretary-General and the Committee established pursuant to paragraph 24 of resolution 1970 (2011) (“the Committee”) immediately of measures taken in the exercise of the authority conferred by paragraph 13 above;
15. *Requires* any Member State whether acting nationally or through regional organisations or arrangements, when it undertakes an inspection pursuant to paragraph 13 above, to submit promptly an initial written report to the Committee containing, in particular, explanation of the grounds for the inspection, the results of such inspection, and whether or not cooperation was provided, and, if prohibited items for transfer are found, further requires such Member States to submit to the Committee, at a later stage, a subsequent written report containing relevant details on the inspection, seizure, and disposal, and relevant details of the transfer, including a description of the items, their origin and intended destination, if this information is not in the initial report;
16. *Deplores* the continuing flows of mercenaries into the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and *calls upon* all Member States to comply strictly with their obligations under paragraph 9 of resolution 1970 (2011) to prevent the provision of armed mercenary personnel to the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya;

Ban on flights

17. *Decides* that all States shall deny permission to any aircraft registered in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya or owned or operated by Libyan nationals or companies to take off from, land in or overfly their territory unless the particular flight has been approved in advance by the Committee, or in the case of an emergency landing;
18. *Decides that* all States shall deny permission to any aircraft to take off from, land in or overfly their territory, if they have information that provides reasonable grounds to believe that the aircraft contains items the supply, sale, transfer, or export of which is prohibited by paragraphs 9 and 10 of resolution 1970 (2011) as modified by this resolution,

including the provision of armed mercenary personnel, except in the case of an emergency landing;

Asset freeze

19. *Decides* that the asset freeze imposed by paragraph 17, 19, 20 and 21 of resolution 1970 (2011) shall apply to all funds, other financial assets and economic resources which are on their territories, which are owned or controlled, directly or indirectly, by the Libyan authorities, as designated by the Committee, or by individuals or entities acting on their behalf or at their direction, or by entities owned or controlled by them, as designated by the Committee, and *decides further* that all States shall ensure that any funds, financial assets or economic resources are prevented from being made available by their nationals or by any individuals or entities within their territories, to or for the benefit of the Libyan authorities, as designated by the Committee, or individuals or entities acting on their behalf or at their direction, or entities owned or controlled by them, as designated by the Committee, and directs the Committee to designate such Libyan authorities, individuals or entities within 30 days of the date of the adoption of this resolution and as appropriate thereafter;
20. *Affirms* its determination to ensure that assets frozen pursuant to paragraph 17 of resolution 1970 (2011) shall, at a later stage, as soon as possible be made available to and for the benefit of the people of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya;
21. *Decides* that all States shall require their nationals, persons subject to their jurisdiction and firms incorporated in their territory or subject to their jurisdiction to exercise vigilance when doing business with entities incorporated in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya or subject to its jurisdiction, and any individuals or entities acting on their behalf or at their direction, and entities owned or controlled by them, if the States have information that provides reasonable grounds to believe that such business could contribute to violence and use of force against civilians;

Designations

22. *Decides* that the individuals listed in Annex I shall be subject to the travel restrictions imposed in paragraphs 15 and 16 of resolution 1970 (2011), and *decides* further that the individuals and entities listed in Annex II shall be subject to the asset freeze imposed in paragraphs 17, 19, 20 and 21 of resolution 1970 (2011);

23.*Decides* that the measures specified in paragraphs 15, 16, 17, 19, 20 and 21 of resolution 1970 (2011) shall apply also to individuals and entities determined by the Council or the Committee to have violated the provisions of resolution 1970 (2011), particularly paragraphs 9 and 10 thereof, or to have assisted others in doing so;

Panel of Experts

24.*Requests* the Secretary-General to create for an initial period of one year, in consultation with the Committee, a group of up to eight experts ("Panel of Experts"), under the direction of the Committee to carry out the following tasks:

- (a) Assist the Committee in carrying out its mandate as specified in paragraph 24 of resolution 1970 (2011) and this resolution;
- (b) Gather, examine and analyse information from States, relevant United Nations bodies, regional organisations and other interested parties regarding the implementation of the measures decided in resolution 1970 (2011) and this resolution, in particular incidents of non-compliance;
- (c) Make recommendations on actions the Council, or the Committee or State, may consider to improve implementation of the relevant measures;
- (d) Provide to the Council an interim report on its work no later than 90 days after the Panel's appointment, and a final report to the Council no later than 30 days prior to the termination of its mandate with its findings and recommendations;

25.*Urges* all States, relevant United Nations bodies and other interested parties, to cooperate fully with the Committee and the Panel of Experts, in particular by supplying any information at their disposal on the implementation of the measures decided in resolution 1970 (2011) and this resolution, in particular incidents of non-compliance;

26.*Decides* that the mandate of the Committee as set out in paragraph 24 of resolution 1970 (2011) shall also apply to the measures decided in this resolution;

27.*Decides* that all States, including the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, shall take the necessary measures to ensure that no claim shall lie at the instance of the Libyan authorities, or of any person or body in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, or of any person claiming through or for the benefit of any such person or body, in connection with any contract or other transaction where its performance was affected by reason of the measures taken by

the Security Council in resolution 1970 (2011), this resolution and related resolutions;

28.*Reaffirms* its intention to keep the actions of the Libyan authorities under continuous review and underlines its readiness to review at any time the measures imposed by this resolution and resolution 1970 (2011), including by strengthening, suspending or lifting those measures, as appropriate, based on compliance by the Libyan authorities with this resolution and resolution 1970 (2011).

29.*Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

Appendix 4

CHINESE BUSINESSES IN LIBYA

There are 13 companies involved in projects in Libya, as below.

Company Name	Project	Investment Amount
China Railway Engineering Corporation	Coastal Railway and its extension line (Tripoli–Sirte), South–North Railway, Western Railway	US\$4.237 billion
China Architecture Engineering Corporation	Government Housing Project, about 20 000 houses	RMB 17.6 billion (about US\$2.7808 billion)
China Gezhouba Group	Housing Construction, 7 300 houses	US\$5.54 billion
No.15 Metallurgical Construction Group	FWAM cement plant and NALOUT cement plant	Unknown
China National Building Materials Group Corporation	Construction and installation of a cement factory producing 4 600 tons of cement everyday	US\$0.15 billion
No.1 Metallurgical Construction Group	5 000 apartments and service facilities in East Melita District, EPC project, construction project of cement production line in Misurata	RMB 5.131 billion (US\$0.810698 billion)
CNPC	Entering Libya in 2002, owning 5 subsidiary companies in Libya before the war	unknown
SINOHYDRO Corporation	6 projects under construction	US\$1.788 billion
China Communication Construction Company	unknown	US\$4.8 billion
CHINA CAMC Engineering Company	unknown	US\$4 billion
PetroChina Company Limited	unknown	US\$0.38 billion
Zhong Xing Communication Manufacturing Industry	unknown	US\$92,700,000
HUA WEI (Information and Communication solution provider)	unknown	US\$40,000,000

About 75 Chinese companies operated in Libya before the start of the NATO intervention. There were about 36 000 staff and 50 projects. Many of those firms were engaged in building roads, buildings and infrastructure as outlined above.

China's top three state oil firms, CNPC, Sinopec Group and CNOOC, all had engineering projects in Libya, but no oil production as of the moment of the NATO intervention.

Appendix 5

THIS IS MY WILL

by Muammar Gaddafi

This is my will. I, Muammar bin Mohammad bin Abdussalam bi Humayd bin Abu Manyar bin Humayd bin Nayil al Fuhsi Gaddafi, do swear that there is no god but God and that Mohammad is God's Prophet, peace be upon him. I pledge that I will die as Muslim.

Should I be killed, I would like to be buried, according to Muslim rituals, in the clothes I was wearing at the time of my death and my body unwashed, in the cemetery of Sirte, next to my family and relatives.

I would like that my family, especially women and children, be treated well after my death.

The Libyan people should protect its identity, achievements, history, and the honorable image of its ancestors and heroes. The Libyan people should not relinquish the sacrifices of the free and best people.

I call on my supporters to continue the resistance, and fight any foreign aggressor against Libya, today, tomorrow, and always.

Let the free people of the world know that we could have bargained over and sold out our cause in return for a personal secure and stable life. We received many offers to this effect but we chose to be at the vanguard of the confrontation as a badge of duty and honor.

Even if we do not win immediately, we will give a lesson to future generations that choosing to protect the nation is an honor and selling it out is the greatest betrayal that history will remember forever despite the attempts of the others to tell you otherwise.

When the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings erupted in Africa, in the first two months of the year 2011, with the chant, 'the people want to bring down the regime', there was hope all over the continent that these rebellions were part of a wider African Awakening. President Ben Ali of Tunisia was forced to step down and fled to Saudi Arabia. Within a month of Ben Ali's departure, Hosni Mubarak of Egypt was removed from power by the people, who mobilised a massive revolutionary movement in the country. Four days after the ousting of Mubarak, sections of the Libyan people rebelled in Benghazi. Within days, this uprising was militarised, with armed resistance countered by declarations from the Libyan leadership vowing to use raw state power to root out the rebellion. The first Libyan demonstrations occurred on February 15, 2011, but by February 21 there were reports that innocent civilians were in imminent danger of being massacred by the army. This information was embellished by reports of the political leadership branding the rebellious forces as 'rats'. The United States (US), Britain and France took the lead to rush through a resolution in the United Nations (UN) Security Council, invoking the principle of the 'responsibility to protect'. This concept of responsibility to protect had been embraced and supported by many governments in the aftermath of the genocidal episodes in Rwanda, Bosnia and Kosovo. The UN Security Council Resolution 1973 of 2011 was loosely worded, with the formulation 'all necessary measures' tacked on to ensure wide latitude for those societies and political leaders who orchestrated the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) intervention in Libya. In the following nine months, the implementation of this UN resolution exposed the real objectives of the leaders of the US, France and Britain. With the Western media fuelling a propaganda campaign in the traditions of 'manufacturing consent', this Security Council authorisation was stretched from a clear and limited civilian protection mandate into a military campaign for regime change and the execution of the President of Libya, Muammar Gaddafi.

About the author

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